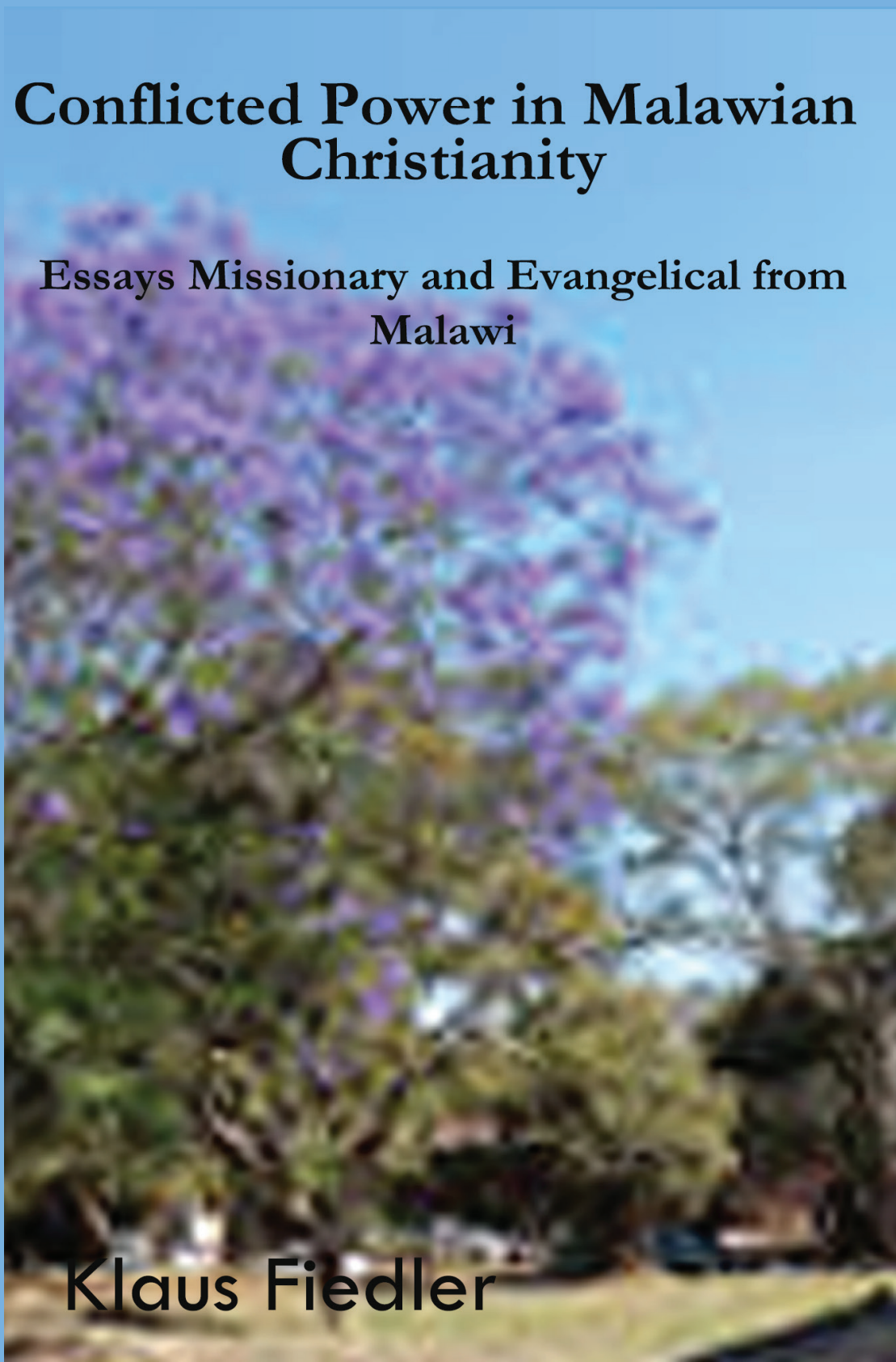


Conflicted Power in Malawian Christianity

**Essays Missionary and Evangelical from
Malawi**

Klaus Fiedler



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Conflicted Power in Malawian Christianity

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Conflicted Power in Malawian Christianity: Essays Missionary and Evangelical from Malawi

Klaus Fiedler

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To my teachers
Martin Metzger, Louise Pirouet, John Mbiti, Canon Hutchinson,
Isariah Kimambo

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1 For the Sake of Christian Marriage, Abolish Church Weddings¹ (1995/1998)

Introduction

As the title indicates, this essay is *not* a dispassionate description of the interaction between African traditional culture and Christianity. I write it as a pastor of the church, who is concerned with both the care for the spiritual well-being of people and the care for the faithful tradition and application of divine revelation as preserved in the Biblical message.

As a pastor and theologian, I am convinced that marriage is one of the basic human institutions of abiding value for all time. As such it deserves the loving care of the church, a fact which is emphasized by the special attention Jesus Christ devoted to marriage in his teaching.²

Though this essay is written by an insider who is concerned, it is nevertheless a case study, sharing the limitations of any case study. Its basic material is from North Eastern Congo and from Kenya,³ and the churches concerned are all evangelical in character, going back to interdenominational faith missions. Comparative material will be used from other Protestant churches in East Africa and Malawi, and also from the Roman Catholic Church.

As a case study this chapter is also limited in scope and intention. It looks at the interactions of two cultures (and to some extent two religions) as they crystallize around the wedding ceremony, thus leaving out other issues of interaction like the issues of family concepts, polygamy or divorce. But it is my contention that these issues crystallizing around the wedding ceremony do provide venues for insights into African marriage patterns in a cultural conflict which lead beyond just the ceremony.

¹ First published as: Klaus Fiedler, "For the Sake of Christian Marriage, Abolish Church Weddings" in: James L. Cox (ed), *Rites of Passage in Contemporary Africa. Interaction between Christian and African Traditional Religions*, Cardiff: Cardiff University Press, 1998, pp. 46-60 and as: Klaus Fiedler, "For the Sake of Christian Marriage, Abolish Church Weddings," in: *Religion in Malawi*, 1995, pp. 22-27, (also on ACP CD-ROM).

² *Mt 19:1-12; Mk 10:1-12.

³ This research was made possible by a grant from the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, Bonn, and it was conducted in 1986/7.

The ethnic groups dealt with in this essay are all patrilineal. Many basic arguments of this essay do not apply to matrilineal societies.

In this essay I will repeatedly speak of theology *talked* as being different from theology *acted*. This differentiation is important, and I consider theology *acted* as the real one.

Historical and theological background

All churches in the basic case study are classified by Barrett in his *World Christian Encyclopedia* as "Protestant interdenominational." This does not mean that they *are* interdenominational churches, but that they are the result of the work of interdenominational faith missions, the first of which was the China Inland Mission founded in 1865 by Hudson and Maria Taylor. Their most pressing concern was to reach those areas of the globe ("Inland") that were still unreached by the Gospel. To achieve this end, they were very innovative: Ordination was of no importance, lengthy theological training was not required, women were seen as equal to men and therefore as qualified for independent pioneer missionary work. Money was not to play a major role either since the missionaries would trust God that by prayer and faith (hence the nickname "faith missions") he would supply all their needs. Ecclesiastical differences were to be of no concern. This meant that Protestant Christians of any denomination could become faith missionaries, provided they had the right spirituality and could sign a basic evangelical creed.⁴

The first faith mission in Africa was the Livingstone Inland Mission, founded in 1878 by Fanny Guinness in London for pioneer work in Congo, starting from the mouth of the Congo ("Livingstone") River.⁵ The major faith missions in this case study are the Africa Inland Mission (AIM), founded by Peter Cameron Scott in Philadelphia in 1895 and WEC International, founded by C.T. Studd in Congo in 1913 with his wife Priscilla administering the home base in London.⁶ The main churches resulting from the AIM were in

⁴ I differentiate the faith missions from what I call the "classical missions." The classical missions (from 1792 onwards) have their spiritual roots in the Great Awakening, whereas the faith missions have their roots in the Holiness Revival of 1859/1873.

⁵ For more details on the faith missions see Klaus Fiedler, *The Story of the Faith Missions*, Oxford: Regnum; Sutherland NSW, 1992, pp. 34-40.

⁶ Eileen Vincent, *C.T. Studd and Priscilla. United to Fight for Jesus*, Bromley/Gerrards Cross/Eastbourne 1988.

Kenya the Africa Inland Church and in Congo CECA20 (Communauté Évangélique au Centre de l'Afrique) and CECCA16 (Communauté Évangélique du Christ au Coeur d'Afrique). These churches were the pioneer Protestant churches in their respective areas.⁷ Their creeds are simply evangelical, and both missions developed a church polity which is somewhat Presbyterian in administration and somewhat Baptist in sacramental theology.

Neither church teaches a *doctrine* of the sacraments, but they do have baptism, communion and weddings. In line with general Protestant conviction, marriage is not seen as a sacrament, and in line with Baptist practice they would prefer not to call baptism and communion sacraments but (divine) ordinances. Though many faith missionaries came from Protestant churches baptizing infants (for example Presbyterians), most faith missions opted for believers' baptism for the churches resulting from their work. This applies to CECCA16 and CECA20, too.

The number of sacraments

The faith missionaries were quite clear: There are two sacraments, baptism and communion. This is by no means as clear in the faith mission churches today. Upon inquiry, very often three or four sacraments were named: Always baptism and communion, very often marriage, sometimes dedication of children. This increase in the number of sacraments was facilitated by the fact that the faith missions rarely taught what a sacrament was, often even did not use the term, just speaking of baptism and communion or the Lord's table.⁸ Not being taught to define a sacrament, the people had to trust their own judgment. To them sacraments are solemn rites of the church to which one has to be admitted first and which, after being admitted to them, grant a certain status. According to this yardstick, (church-) marriage is distinctly the highest sacrament.

The churches *teach*, that marriage is a "civil affair" and not a sacrament, but they *behave* that it is something very different, and accord its beginning (the wedding) the highest religious status. This means that there are two theologies, one *spoken* and the other *acted*. I take theology acted as the real one, since it matters in the life of the people.

⁷ There exist no firm statistics, but a combined membership of the three churches of 2 million members may be a conservative estimate.

⁸ In some languages there is not even a word "sacrament," for example in Kipsigi [Kenya] (Int. Bill Reinheld 16.12.1986).

The crucial role of the bride price

In anthropological terms bride-wealth would be the more correct term, but since in these days the payments are very often converted into cash and since the amounts are ever rising, I prefer the term "bride price."⁹

Many early missionaries had opposed the acceptance of bride-wealth as implying the "selling of women," but all of them had soon come to learn that this was the African way of constituting a legal marriage. Therefore, just as much as in many European wedding ceremonies, the fulfillment of civil requirements was required (for example the ceremonial question in England: "Who giveth away this woman?"), so in Africa the fulfillment of the civil requirements (bride price) was expected, too. This requirement was not integrated into the liturgy as some European requirements had been, but the bride price was seen as necessary and also as mostly useful. Within less than a generation of missionary work, a considerable adaptation of the Christian theology of marriage to the African cultural context had taken place.

But African culture was never static, and this applied not only to the amount of bride price to be paid, but also to its role in society and to its functions. Whereas at the turn of the century in most societies the bride price was paid in full (or almost so) before the couple began married life,¹⁰ this changed in many societies with the constant rise of the bride price. Neither in North East Congo where I did this research, nor in South West Tanzania where I lived for seven years, was the man's family expected to pay the bride price before the marriage. For a comparatively small payment the young man would win sexual access to his bride, and payment of maybe a quarter would allow them to set up house together. To complete the payments ten years after the marriage was considered to be a fast performance, and should the wife die before the payments had been completed, the wife's relatives would retain one or more of the children according to the completion rate. But what is important is the fact that not only would it be hardly possible to pay the price before the marriage, but also that this was not expected, because full payment would to some extent free the couple from control by the parental generation, whereas partial non-payment would extend it.

⁹ In Swahili both *mali* (wealth, goods) and *malipiro* (payments) are used.

¹⁰ Among the Nyika of Tanzania for example the young man had to work about seven years for his in-laws before he could claim his bride, who by then would have reached the age of about 16 years.

Since the church insists that the civil requirements of a marriage be fulfilled, and since the church recognized the payment of bride price as being the fulfillment of the civil requirements, the church got herself into a fix: Without payment of bride price there could be no Christian marriage, but since bride price would have been paid normally only after the birth of the fourth child or so, the first children of a marriage would be born out of wedlock and their parents would live in concubinage and would, as such, be excluded from the sacraments of the church (and thus from divine grace, too, since the sacraments are to convey divine grace).

This applies to various churches to varying degrees. It describes correctly the situation in the Roman Catholic Church in South Tanzania, but equally so the situation in the Africa Inland Church in Kenya, which makes a church wedding the prerequisite for receiving communion. This explains to some extent why in that church on the day of communion, sometimes up to 70% of the church members and faithful church attenders leave the church as they are not qualified for participating in the sacrament of Christian fellowship. CECCA16, to the contrary, does accept a marriage as valid even without the church wedding.¹¹

It is sad to note that some churches, which in their youthful days managed so well to adapt to African marriage culture, lost this ability, when African marriage culture changed. It is true that churches like the Roman Catholic Church do not tie the performance of the sacrament of marriage to the full payment of the bride price, but that is theology *talked*, not theology *acted*. Even if the priest correctly interprets canon law as not requiring the payment of bride price (theology *talked*), by agreeing to "marry" couples who have been married for 20 years he *teaches* otherwise (theology *acted*).

In *popular* theology Christian marriage is understood to be binding for life. Therefore you don't take that risk too early, don't you? It may be that after the church ceremony, the husband's family would see no reason to complete the payments. I am well aware that no church *teaches* this, but many churches *live* it. This situation can only be remedied if the church, after having successfully inculturated one aspect of Christian marriage to what was then African culture, manages to disconnect its sacrament of marriage from the payment of bride price since the role of the bride price in African society has changed considerably.

¹¹ In CECCA16 participation in communion is also low, because many people are regular church attenders, and for all practical purposes good Christians, but postpone baptism until they consider themselves or are considered by the local church leadership, to be worthy for baptism.

Changing patterns of African marriage: "Marriage by eloping"

The churches require—in good inculturationist style—that civil requirements are fulfilled for a marriage. But what constitutes a "valid civil marriage" in changing African societies?

Because of the tremendous bride price in many areas (for example Northeast Congo and Kenya), "marriage by eloping" has become the rule. The churches do not accept this as a form of civil marriage, but look at it as concubinage, to be punished by exclusion from the means of grace. But "marriage by eloping" these days in Northeast Congo is a thoroughly acceptable (and accepted) form of civil marriage: The young man finds his bride by using the traditional go-betweens, then he talks to her (bride price included in the discussion), she takes her time to make inquiries about the suitor, and when she finally agrees, an evening is fixed for her "eloping" from home. She is duly received with all honour by the bridegroom's family, sometimes some good food is served, too. They start to live together. Immediately the bride's family is informed ("don't look for your daughter, she is with us"), so that a date for the bride price negotiations can be fixed.¹²

This new (and nevertheless thoroughly African) way of getting married could in one aspect at least appeal to the churches: In it the consent of the marriage partners plays a prominent role, and this free and voluntary consent, according to the churches' teaching, is one of the most basic ingredients for a proper marriage. But the churches usually conceive "marriage by eloping" as sin, to be remedied by a proper wedding (though usually only low key, it being a "second hand wedding"), preceded by due repentance on the side of the young couple. But usually neither the young couple nor society would see this new style of getting married as sin (it's just an efficient way to cut short overlong negotiations and to push those a bit who are slow to act), and so their repentance afterwards is just "as required." They repent for a sin they can hardly see with a repentance that can hardly be seen.

The crucial role of the church wedding [-feast]

The issues described above could be seen as problems resulting from the interaction of African culture with Christianity. But with Christianity came

¹² Described in detail in: David Langford, *Areas of Pastoral Concern - Marriage* 6. Langford describes the situation among the Hema in Northeastern Congo (CECA20 [AIM]). But in very many areas of East Africa the situation is basically the same.

European culture, too. Sometimes Christianity consciously opposed European culture in Africa, sometimes consciously cooperated with it, and perhaps most often there was an unquestioned and somewhat naive intermingling between the two. This applies to many conceptions connected to a Christian wedding. Yes, it had to be in church and in style. And in a young church, isn't it a joy when the first *Christian* couple is to get married? Which male missionary will not take care that the ceremony is dignified enough? And which female missionary will not care that the bride ("the first ever in this young church") will be dressed properly (a bridal veil can easily be made from some curtain material!) and that there is a little reception after the ceremony (which must be a little impressive, too ...)?

As for the solemnity of the rite, the missionaries themselves had set the example. Here is one from the early Congo Balolo Mission:

Christmas Eve - dawned a glorious summer day - for the wedding of Mr. Fred Gardner and Miss Elizabeth Henson. Preparations began in early morning. The native boys themselves decorated the church most beautifully. After the official State ceremony in French at Basankusu, the Bride and Bridegroom returned to the prettily decorated church at Ikan. Here in Lomongo, English and Lingala an impressive service was conducted by Mr. F. Antice before a large congregation. Much interest was aroused amongst the natives when the bridegroom endowed his bride with 'all his worldly goods'. The happy couple left the church amid scenes of rejoicing. A reception was given at Mr. and Mrs Antice's house later in the day. After four days the bride and bridegroom returned to Bongandanga. We wish them every blessing in their service for the King.¹³

This ceremony, again, was not theology *talked*, but theology *acted*, and therefore real and effective theology, which the nascent African church could hardly do otherwise but accept and imitate. It goes without saying that in the *teaching* of the faith mission churches there is no connection whatsoever between the church wedding and the (expensive) feast. However, folk church practice seems to allow no other option. For the church wedding (-feast), not only is excellent food required, but also the bridal dress and the bridegroom's suit. In accordance with the solemnity required, special clothes for the bridesmaids, best men, parents and relatives, and maybe transport for all the guests are needed. In North Eastern Congo such a church wedding easily costs a quarter or more of the bride price of eight cows, so that 1-2 years' work are required just to

¹³ Congo Mission News/Nouvelles Missionnaires du Congo No 98.

finance the event.¹⁴ In Kenya the situation is similar; very few can afford a church wedding. For those who can afford it, it is a major status symbol.

Church weddings have become even more a difficult problem for Christian marriage because of another process of change in African society: the growing social stratification. While most people are quite poor, this does not apply to all. Even in Kenya, where there is much more wealth than in North East Congo, most people cannot afford a church wedding. Others can, and for those who can it is a major status symbol, as anyone who looks at the wedding-report pages in Kenyan newspapers will realize.

Thus the wedding ceremony is a case of a naive transfer of Western customs to Africa under the guise of a Christian ceremony. Africans usually do not object to the mixing of cultures, and in the church's doctrine there is nothing to oppose it, either. So no objection to the bridal veil, bridesmaids, special dresses and suits etc. And there is no objection to the church requiring the fulfillment of civil obligations like paying bride price. The problem is that the church did not take the wedding ceremony as the blessing of an existing marriage, but as the real thing. Therefore a marriage without the church ceremony could not be a real marriage, or at least not a Christian marriage. This in turn means that, because of either the high bride price or the expensive wedding feast or because of both, a Christian marriage is out of reach for most Christians, however faithful Christians they might be otherwise (unless they are rich in material things).

The [non]-sacrament of marriage as a means of religious stratification

The ability or inability to afford a church wedding can be seen as the result of the process of social stratification in Africa. Some can afford it (or have to), but most can not. But a perhaps more important process of stratification takes place within the church in all those cases where the church requires a church wedding as a precondition for either full membership or for the acquisition of special graces.

Africa Inland Church, the Roman Catholic Church and others make the church wedding a precondition for receiving the sacraments. This includes, for Catholics, even the sacrament of confession. In the Catholic Church baptism is easy to obtain. Most people receive it without even asking for it. But even in CECCA16, CECA20 and Africa Inland Church, all churches which

¹⁴ David Langford, *Areas of Pastoral Concern - Marriage* (unpublished) 1985, p. 8. Others estimate that only a year is needed (Int. Donald Muchmore 30.12.1986).

do not baptize babies, baptism is easy to obtain, though the precondition is the experience of a genuine conversion. However, that requirement again is theology *talked*, not theology *acted*. In practice the *profession* of conversion is sufficient, then follows inscription for baptismal instruction. Regular attendance then qualifies one for baptism, which is being administered to ever younger children.¹⁵ This is a definite change from the earlier practice of making admission to baptism difficult.¹⁶

Admission to communion is more difficult to obtain. Here again the Roman Catholic Church is the leader. She is content that the vast majority of young and middle aged adults is barred from the sacrament. In some faith mission churches, admission to communion is proof of a "proper" married life.¹⁷ But in addition to that even church members in good standing often do not partake in communion, because of what I call "fear of the sacrament."¹⁸

But the highest sacrament of them all is the church wedding, though in Protestant theology it is no sacrament at all. It is far more solemn than baptism and more difficult to attain than communion. Its preconditions are not only baptism and the right to share in the Lord's table but also the fulfillment of all civil requirements for a marriage. Those who can achieve or afford it, are in the upper strata of religious society. This is made clear in CECCA16 for example. There you don't need a church wedding for communion, but you need it for ordination. In the Africa Inland Church in Western Kenya an experienced Sunday school leader was to become a church elder. But he couldn't, because he had never had a church wedding.

¹⁵ In theology *talked* the youngest age for baptism was always around 12 years, quite in conformity with Baptist practice in many Western countries, but in theology *acted* those baptized can be as young as 6 years.

¹⁶ This was clearly the case in the early Africa Inland Mission, but not in the very early WEC missionary work in Congo, but even there the practice of baptism very soon after conversion (or "baptism on demand"?) was soon changed "because of bad experiences with quick baptism."

¹⁷ Though from church to church the conditions for a "proper" married life may differ greatly.

¹⁸ This "fear" is not clearly defined, it may be expressed in a feeling of not being "worthy." In Malawi both in Presbyterian and Baptist contexts frequently women do not participate in communion because they are menstruating. – For a Presbyterian treatment of the issue see: Felix L. Chingota, "Sacraments and Sexuality," *Religion in Malawi*, 1998, pp. 34-40.

A Baptist pastor told me a similar case from the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian here in Malawi.

My cousin, a Presbyterian, wanted to become a church deacon.¹⁹ But he had to have a church wedding first. To have a church wedding without the appropriate wedding feast would have been a shame. The wedding feast finally would cost 5000 Kwacha.²⁰ He had to postpone having it because he could not find the money in time. Now he is a deacon, after having had a church wedding.

The attitude that a church wedding is needed for certain offices in the church provides for religious stratification. It is not easy to afford a church wedding, so there must be a reward, like the office of deacon or elder. The highest reward is ordination, and there can be no ordination without a church wedding in most churches.

Another way in which religious stratification is effected by church weddings is the right to perform them. In the Africa Inland Church in Kenya there is a distinction between licensed and ordained pastors. Licensing, which usually is a temporary measure, has become a permanent feature in the Africa Inland Church, with at least two thirds of the pastors not achieving ordination during their lifetime. Both licensed and ordained ministers are allowed to administer baptism and communion, but only an ordained minister can conduct a church wedding.²¹ So it happened that for many years a whole district of the AIC with 18 congregations was without a single ordained pastor,²² and if anyone wanted to achieve a church wedding, he also had to pay for the cost of "importing" an ordained pastor into this somewhat remote district.

Stratification through church weddings permits differentiation between a higher and a lower set of clergy.²³ This differentiation between a clerus

¹⁹ In Christian ethics this desire is highly commendable.

²⁰ 5000 Kwacha then were about 1100 US \$, and about 300 Kwacha was the monthly starting salary for junior civil servants.

²¹ Sometimes it is claimed that this must be so since only ordained ministers can be registered as "marriage officers" of the government. This view is not correct. Government does not look for ordination, just for endorsement by the church.

²² In 1986 Samson Kozi Maliwa, leader of Tana District with 18 congregations, was only licensed (Int. Samson Kozi Maliwa 20.12.1986). Pastor Maliwa was ordained on 25.1.1990, so the number of church weddings has increased (Kozi Maliwa - Fiedler 27.1.1993).

²³ It also seems to reduce the number of claimants on the material benefits that derive from performing weddings.

major and a clerus minor is very much at variance with the practice at the roots of the faith mission churches, which paid scant attention to ordination.²⁴ The missions had introduced this differentiation by employing large numbers of "evangelists" and later by granting ordination to a very small number among them. The independent Africa Inland Church just carried this differentiation into the ranks of the ministers. It can be argued that she just followed the mission's theology *acted*.

Similar distinctions are being made by churches as different as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, which in its Northern Diocese permitted the senior evangelists (who were de facto pastors of a congregation), to administer the sacraments. When I inquired what then was the difference between such an "evangelist of the synod" and a minister, the reply was: "The evangelists of the synod are not allowed to perform marriages." In the Assemblies of God in Malawi ordained ministers "are permitted to perform all ordinances and ceremonies of the church." Licensed ministers "are permitted to perform all ordinances and ceremonies of the church except the marriage ceremony."²⁵

All this tells me that in these Protestant churches, in theology *acted*, the church wedding is the highest sacrament.

A scarcity of Christian marriages?

If the church wedding can be likened to the source of the river of Christian marriage, then this source is speedily drying up. Many years ago the church-wedding was the norm in North East Congo, today it is a rare event. In Kisangani Congregation [formerly Unevangelized Fields Mission, an offshoot of WEC] there has not been a church wedding for 10 years,²⁶ in the northern CECA20 territory there are practically none.²⁷ In the southern area around Oicha there are church weddings (about 50%), but the frequency is

²⁴ In the Africa Inland Mission, for example, every male missionary, ordained or not, was accorded full sacramental rights.

²⁵ Assemblies of God in Malawi, Constitution and By-Laws, Revised August, 1990, Article 5, Section 1 (*italics mine*).

²⁶ Meanwhile even a legend helps to legitimize the neglect of church weddings: Many years ago there was a church wedding, and the bride ran away from her husband that very night. Since then no church wedding ever took place, it was regarded as a bad omen for the success of a marriage (Int. Hilde Moro 5.1.1987).

²⁷ David Langford, Areas of Pastoral Concern – Marriage, p. 8; Int. Rev Ang'apoza Etsea Kila 30.12.1986.

declining.²⁸ In CECCA16 the number of church weddings is low, but a church wedding is not required there. The same applies for example to the Baptists in Malawi.²⁹

Does this mean that all those who have had no church wedding do not lead a Christian married life? Protestant theology *talked* would not agree to this conclusion, nor would honest observation support it. Having a church wedding these days is less a matter of Christian quality than of secular Kwachas (or Zaires, Shillings or Zimdollars).

This scarcity of church weddings was brought about by the fateful interaction of three cultures and by the churches tying their standards to waning aspects of African culture like the payment of bride price *before* marriage. If it is the duty of the church to adapt to African culture, she must also be willing to adapt to changes in that same African culture. Therefore the churches should take new forms of African marriage as seriously as they took the old forms. Inculturation cannot be effected once and for ever. It must be a dynamic process of the churches, ever relating the eternal Gospel in a meaningful way to the processes of social change.

Christian values lost

The policy of the churches under discussion in this case study and of many other churches in East and Central Africa has led to the loss of several Christian values. First of all the value of Christian marriage was lost. By putting a high value on Christian marriage (through emphasis on the necessity of the church wedding) in theology *talked*, the churches kept many (often most) of the marriages of their members out of the reach of Christian influence. This does not tally with the New Testament's emphasis on Christian marriage, and it does not tally with the important role marriage plays in African culture either.

There are other values lost, for example the good Christian value of honesty. A church's emphasis on a thing hard to achieve (the wedding ceremony after payment of full bride price) makes people repent of sins which they *honestly* do not feel to have committed. There is also good reason to accuse the church of materialism, since many churches make an

²⁸ Int. Rév. Musangura Mbafefe-Mussamba 3.1.1987.

²⁹ I asked a Baptist pastor from Blantyre if in his church a church wedding is required. "No," he said, "but then it's not a Christian marriage." "How frequent are church weddings?" I asked. "There are a few, not in my church alone, a few in all the churches in Blantyre."

expensive enterprise a cornerstone of spiritual achievement. The conveyance of spiritual graces is conditioned on material achievements.

The different churches, to varying degrees, have accepted that their rite/sacrament of marriage has been turned from a means to convey God's grace at the beginning of the marital journey, into a reward for the achievers. The rite/sacrament of marriage has become a status symbol for the laity, and for the clergy a major element in ecclesiastical power structures. What is very spiritual in theology *talked*, is very secular in theology *acted*.

This contradiction, while not unknown in America or Europe, has been much aggravated by interaction (on different levels) between Christianity and African culture (changes in that culture included!). Speaking as one who is concerned, I cannot but regret the fact that the churches have either been unable or unwilling to remedy this confused situation.

A need for a new Process of inculturation

When the early missionaries accepted bride price as an institution compatible with the values of Christian marriage, they adapted the practice of the church well to African culture,³⁰ but many churches stopped the process of inculturation, when the social situation affecting marriages changed. The present situation can be seen as a process of adverse inculturation. The church wedding as an exquisite event has been absorbed into the wealthy segments of more or less secular African culture.³¹

I claim that a new process of inculturation is needed, a process which takes current African marriage as seriously as it had done a hundred years ago with what were then current African marriage patterns.

Such a process of inculturation must consciously make room for social change. Christianity cannot just relate to African culture at one point in time, it must relate to it at *any* point in time.

Inculturation of the Gospel does not mean to give in to African culture (or any culture) in all things, but inculturation may mean conflict for the sake of the Gospel.

³⁰ At least in this aspect. Other aspects, where the church adapted less successfully, are beyond the scope of this paper.

³¹ This compares easily with Germany, where the church wedding has become part of *secular* society in the same way as confirmation and Christmas eve church attendance. Churches otherwise pretty empty are full on that day, not because of a sudden upsurge of spiritual desires but "because it's so romantic."

Do something quickly!

I am convinced that, for the sake of Christian marriage, and for the sake of millions of Christian Africans who want to live a Christian married life, something must be done, and be done quickly.

1. Since in the New Testament there is a lot of teaching about Christian marriage, but not the slightest allusion to a church wedding, I conclude that no church wedding is needed to make a marriage a Christian marriage.³²

2. The church must take "folk theology" seriously and must accept that, though in theology *talked* there is no need for a feast to follow the church wedding, in *practice* the feast has become an integral part of the sacrament/rite/ceremony.

3. The churches must admit that attempts to keep the bride price low by means of church legislation have met no success.

4. Therefore the churches should accept any genuine African marriage as a valid marriage. This would be real inculturation.

5. The church wedding is neither a constituent part of the Christian faith nor was it an integral part of African culture. Therefore the church should abolish the church wedding.

6. If abolishing church weddings is perceived as too rigid, two things at least should be implemented:

a) No "weddings" after years of marriage.

b) No connection between church wedding and admission to the sacraments or to ordination.

In the process of realistic inculturation the church must not shy away from conflict for the sake of the Gospel. There will be a loud outcry among the (few) achievers in society, but is the church with her "preferential option for the poor" to give preference to the few wealthy achievers and provide for them a semi-secular ceremony to crown their achievements, or is she to be concerned with the many poor people, who already had to abolish church weddings for financial reasons? In keeping the church wedding as the standard, the church pleases the few and burdens the many.

³² This is in conformity with general Protestant dogmatics. Even for Catholics, for whom marriage is a sacrament, there is no need of a church wedding, since it is not the priest who administers the sacrament of marriage, but bride and bridegroom administer it to each other.

Abolish church weddings!

Under the present circumstances in the areas studied, I see no other solution than just to abolish church weddings. They are not needed to make a marriage Christian. To follow this advice would have two less desirable side effects: The young couple would be given no chance to make their commitment to make their marriage a Christian marriage public, nor would there be any possibility of publicly asking God to bless this marriage. But even if church weddings be abolished, provision for this could be made, perhaps along the lines of the "marriage prayer" (*malombi ya marriage*) practiced in CECA20 and some other churches.³³ It is usually applied to couples who "eloped," but who want, after having settled their marriage with the families concerned, return into the full fellowship of their church.³⁴ For this "marriage prayer" the pastor visits the couple, reads the relevant scripture passages to them and prays for them.³⁵ Then usually some food is served. In theological terms, such a blessing of a marriage contains everything required, and the cost factor is negligible. But the fact that this "marriage prayer" may only take place in the house, not in the church, shows that it is second class. And it will remain second class as long as "real" marriages are celebrated in church, as infrequently as that may be.

Actually there is no need for the pastor to come for the "marriage prayer." Two or four elders could be chosen for this ceremony. Possibly half of this number should be female elders, so that they would not only act as prayer leaders, but could also play a role similar to that of the marriage guardians, which existed in some African societies, for example among the Chagga on the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro.

I am looking forward to that day, when it will be no longer possible for a man to talk to me about his wife of more than 20 years, calling her his fiancée (*mchumba*), because they have not yet "been married" (in church).

I am looking forward to the day when no pastor will be required any longer to "marry" a couple, with their five more-or-less grown up children present, asking their parents if they are willing to marry each other.

³³ La Constitution de la CECA.

³⁴ David Langford, *Areas of Pastoral Concern - Marriage* p. 10.

³⁵ Ibid. p. 8; Constitution ya CECA [20].

I am looking forward to the day when no one will have to spend 5000 Kwacha to become a deacon.³⁶

I am also looking forward to the day when the church will do everything in her power to help married couples to *live* Christian marriages, be it by teaching, seminars, counselling, preaching or any other means.³⁷

³⁶ *Since I wrote this the Kwacha has lost much of its value and church weddings have become more elaborate and expensive. The same deacon may well have to find over 200,000 Kwacha these days.

³⁷ *This was one of the first papers I produced after coming to Malawi, as the material from my previous research on ecclesiology of the Faith Missions shows. Looking at it 20 years later, I am still convinced of the chapter's truth. Much reference has been made to it, and I am not aware of any positive influences it has had (or its readers have had through it). The cleavage between marriage and weddings has probably grown, church weddings have become more expensive (at least for the middle class) and bridal showers (or "marriage send offs") have become more elaborate and an almost compulsory part of church weddings, making them even more expensive (and probably even less Christian). For a study of bridal showers etc see: Towera Mwase, *The Marriage Instructions for Girls and Women in Mzuzu Churches*, MA, Mzuzu University, 2012.

2 The Moralities of Condom Use: Theological Considerations¹ (2006)

In the HIV/Aids discourse, condoms have been one of the most contentious topics. The debate has been very heated, and opinions range from blunt support to blunt denial, and arguments used range from technical/scientific to theological. The churches seem to be pitted against government and the NGOs, and among the churches the Roman Catholics seem to be pitted against the rest, as they declare immoral the use of condoms within marriage,² while other churches only condemn the use of condoms outside marriage.

This discourse has been conducted largely on the level of declarations, opinions and official statements, expressed by those in the higher ranks of the church. Very little, at least in Malawi, has been done on the level of research, for example to find out what impact specific religious pronouncements have on the members of the very church that makes such pronouncements.³ In this chapter I want to include some of the—admittedly limited—research findings from Christian Malawi.⁴

While the "official" discourse on condoms and HIV/Aids is going on between the top players, there is also an unofficial discourse among the Christians of lesser standing in the church, a discourse of words—and often even more—a discourse of behaviour. This discourse has very different

¹ First published as: Klaus Fiedler, "The Moralities of Condom Use. Theological Considerations," *Religion in Malawi* 2006, pp. 32-37.

² The Roman Catholic position is based on the papal teaching that all (marital) sex "that is not in principle open to conception" (*Humana Vitae*) is sinful, and which bars all "artificial" methods of contraception. A condom, even if used for HIV prevention, is still a means of "artificial" birth control. At the recent Synod of African Bishops the issue was debated at length, and a wording was found which allows giving advice to faithful Catholic couples that may not exclude the use of condoms in marital sex for discordant couples.

³ From casual observations, the impact of high-ranking church pronouncements may be small. In Italy well above 90% of the population are members of the Roman Catholic Church, which condemns all "artificial methods of birth control" as sin. Still, Italy has one of the lowest birth rates in Europe, far below the 2.1 children per woman needed to sustain the population.

⁴ In my article I confine myself to the Christian side of the issue. But many things are similar in the Islamic community, and I think that a good number of my arguments could also be applied on presuppositions of Islamic theology.

rules and results, and its interface with the official discourse is limited. Looking at things from the unofficial level, I hope to increase the interface between the two discourses. I intend to look at the condom issue(s) from the famous "grass-roots" perspective, because it is there that the people are sick and dying, and since HIV/Aids is a matter of life and death, I intend to emphasize the perspective of the victims.⁵

How good are condoms?

This is not a moral but a technical question.⁶ There is, as all producers of condoms duly state, no absolute guarantee for condoms' effectiveness either in the prevention of infection or of pregnancy.⁷ But condoms are of high quality, and proper (technical) use is possible for responsible people.

In addition, even with a technical failure (like the break of a condom), infection is far from automatic.⁸ And if the infected partner is on ARV drugs, which reduce the viral load to invisibility, this offers additional protection in the case of technical condom failure.⁹ So there is indeed no guarantee that

⁵ Since (limited) research so far has shown that promiscuity is stronger on the male side, I take as a typical victim a married woman. I am aware that promiscuity is not exclusively male and that sometimes even married women are involved. I know that promiscuity and condoms are issues even for the young (and that there are victims among the teenagers), but this article deals primarily with adults, though some of the facts, arguments and conclusions may also apply to the teenage age group.

⁶ The technical quality (or supposed lack of it) has often been mixed up with moral arguments ("Condoms are not safe anyhow, therefore it is [morally] wrong to use them.")

⁷ The figures given in treatments of the issue of birth control are misleading, as the safety statistics for condom use include both improper use and inconsistent use (that is non-use!). With those parameters, failure rates are of necessity high.

⁸ If the wife is the infected partner, and if a condom breaks, and if the sperm gets out, the chances of a pregnancy are higher than of an infection, as the virus would have to climb, so to say, against the current. If the husband is the infected partner, the chances "to pass the infection down" might be higher.

⁹ "Transmission probability per act varies greatly with the HIV-1 viral load of the HIV-1-infected partner, which suggests that interventions to reduce viral load could reduce transmission." (Ronald H Gray, Maria J. Wawer, Ron Brookmeyer, Nelson K. Sewankambo, David Serwadda, Fred Wabwire-Mangen, Tom Lutalo, Xianbin Li, Thomas van Cott, Thomas C Quinn, and the Rakai Project Team, "Probability of HIV-1 Transmission per Coital Act in Monogamous, Heterosexual, HIV-1-discordant

infection cannot take place, but there is a guarantee that the chance of infection will be reduced greatly, and there is a reasonably high chance that consistent use of condoms will prevent all infection.¹⁰

To test this we may ask if Christian counsellors can agree for a discordant couple to marry. I know that many do, and when they do, it is not because HIV infection is part of every marriage, but because they are convinced that for the couple condoms will work so well that there is a reasonable chance to avoid infection over the years of married life.¹¹

The moral conclusion from these facts is that condoms offer a realistic possibility to reduce the infection rate, under good circumstances to almost zero. Condoms can be employed—after due moral consideration—as an appropriate tool to achieve moral ends.

Moral Principles

Due consideration is necessary, of course, as the technical quality and the availability do not as such justify their use.

The principle of *right and wrong*, if used in an abstract way (logical deduction) could easily reach the "no" verdict, definitely outside marriage.

The principle of *supporting and saving life* may come to a very different conclusion. If condoms save life, they should be used.

The issue behind these possibilities is: Is morality a set of abstract propositions or is morality a dedicated attempt to achieve as much moral good as possible?

Couples in Rakai, Uganda)" *The Lancet*, Volume 357: pp 1149-1153, 14 April 2001. Available also on the Internet.

¹⁰ There have been scientific studies of discordant couples over years. The results are clear that in such relationships, when condoms are used consistently, sero-conversions are rare, very close to zero.

¹¹ A backup for such a moral advice is that antiretroviral drugs are now easily available. They reduce the chance of infection greatly, and in case of infection nevertheless, they offer the chance to extend life way beyond the 5-10 years after infection that are normally assigned to one infected. And if the wife is infected, the chance of passing on the infection to the baby can be reduced by the drug Nevirapin, again to almost zero. If the husband is infected, the chance of infecting the child (and the mother) is higher, but here Christian theology offers the (often overlooked and neglected) possibility of adoption.

Since Jesus gave special preference to the vulnerable (widows, orphans, the prisoners, the hungry),¹² I believe that he would also give special preference to victims of HIV/Aids. If we want to base our moral teaching on Jesus' example and guidance, we must look at the issue of condom use first of all from the victims' side.

Condoms within marriage

In discordant marriages

Here the moral choice is either to demand that a discordant couple must not marry (and if the discordance has appeared during marriage, that they stop sexual intercourse forthwith),¹³ or to allow the use of condoms. Since most Christian ethicists would not interdict marriage or deny sex to discordant couples, the use of condoms in such cases must not only be allowed, but also demanded, as it can protect the life of the HIV negative partner.¹⁴ This necessity makes it paramount that the church stops all polemic against condoms ("how unsafe they are"), as good Christian couples need them.

Condoms for the protection of the faithful partner

There are so many marriages (mostly Christian) where one partner is sexually not faithful. Therefore the church should make sure that the marriage certificate is not at the same time a death certificate.¹⁵ For a "regular Christian woman" the highest chance of infection is still her own marriage bed. What the churches must declare to be against Christian morality is not

¹² Matthew 25 shows Jesus' preferences clearly. It should not be overlooked that the Old Testament shows the same preferences (for example Ex. 22:22, Dt. 10:18, Ps 146:9) and so do Jesus' apostles (see James 2:27).

¹³ This moral demand was formulated in a Seventh-day Adventist book by Dr. Gordon and Dr. Cheryl Doss (of which I have lost track).

¹⁴ This demand will also remove the burden from the infected partner's conscience of being the cause for the spouse's infection.

¹⁵ If a church agrees, as I seem to have observed, that a girl marries a man who has already lost two wives to early death (reasons not explained, but definitely neither cancer nor an accident), this shows gross negligence. It was hard to attend her funeral, shortly after her first child had died in childbirth. [Since there is a possibility that the girl or her parents had been warned privately, I cannot mention the name of the church].

that she uses a condom, but that she pays for her faithfulness by infection and death.¹⁶

The churches may have few means to enforce the use of condoms by unfaithful husbands, but they should at least contribute to the fight. If the churches teach that a faithful wife has the right and moral duty to demand from her unfaithful spouse the regular use of condoms, that may help some of them not to become victims.

Conclusions

1. Marital faithfulness does not prevent HIV/Aids.¹⁷ Neither does prayer nor any other act of piety.
2. Those who do what is morally right should be encouraged (almost forced) to appreciate and use the protection condoms offer. This may prolong or save life.
3. The churches should in no way "talk bad" of condoms, so that those who need them will be encouraged to use them.
4. If a church promotes the use of condoms in unfaithful marriages (which might be in the majority), this would support her teaching that the marriage bond is indissoluble.¹⁸

Condoms outside marriage

No change in moral teaching

In considering the issue of condoms, in no way do I propose that the church changes her good teaching on faithfulness during and sexual abstinence before and after marriage. I emphasize this being aware that a number of theologians in the Global North (including churches which are represented in Malawi) have made faithfulness and abstinence optional or as something

¹⁶ That ARVs are now available, may reduce the effects of her husband's sin. But no Christian moral teaching can support the proposition that a wife must accept being infected, even though it may not (no longer) cost her life.

¹⁷ In order to be open and honest, the churches must teach that *mutual* marital faithfulness will prevent infection. This mutuality is probably implied, but not often pronounced. The same applies to the "secular" ABC slogan: "Abstain, be faithful, condomize."

¹⁸ For those churches that are willing to accept divorce, it would make their teaching, not to dissolve a marriage easily, more realistic.

to aim at, probably through trial and error. I emphasize this being also fully aware that the teaching of the churches and the reality on the ground often do not match.

There is a lot of sex outside marriage

Christian moral teaching cannot just be deduced by logical conclusion, but must be aware of the reality among the people, so that it can answer the real issues and give real guidance.

From the limited research done so far,¹⁹ the concept that sexual intercourse is "restricted" to marriage, seems to be known by the majority of Christians, but seems to be heeded by just a minority. Research has shown that many women who are no longer married (divorcees or widows) consider sex an essential requirement of life ("Vitamin K") and that they are not worried that their "boy friends" are all married men.²⁰

There is also much evidence that married men are often not faithful to their wives,²¹ but I have not come across any evidence that polygamy reduces promiscuity.²²

¹⁹ The findings of such limited research as has been done are strongly supported by anecdotal evidence, by things we observe and hear of.

²⁰ Chimwemwe Kalalo, *The Church and Sexual and Reproductive Health in the Anglican Diocese of Upper Shire*, MA, University of Malawi, 2006. Many facts used or alluded to in this paper are found in her research. I equally thank my wife Rachel NyaGondwe for giving me information, including some things which are more restricted to the female side.

²¹ No clear statistical evidence is available. Chimwemwe Kalalo found that 4 out of 49 women were convinced that their husbands were sexually faithful to them (Chimwemwe Kalalo, *The Church and Sexual and Reproductive Health*, MA, University of Malawi, 2006). Rachel Fiedler estimated from a limited study that 80% of Baptist women are not sure of the sexual faithfulness of their husbands (Rachel NyaGondwe Fiedler, "*Kachiwala* Tradition among Baptists," unpublished). There is sufficient anecdotal evidence for this even in marriages of otherwise exemplary Christians.

²² Again, no research on that is known to me. But if we assume that the predominantly Muslim District of Mangochi has a higher rate of polygamous marriages than predominantly Christian districts, the higher number of polygamous marriages has not reduced the HIV infection rate which is on the higher side among the districts in Malawi (but definitely lower than the Christian district of Nsanje). *Moses Mlenga concluded that in ("Christian") Northern Malawi polygamy does not reduce male marital infidelity (Moses Mlenga, *A Critical Examination of*

It is also clear that there are extramarital affairs among married women, but the incidence seems to be much lower than among married men.

Cultural sanction

As Christian theologians we must be aware not only of the biblical teaching and the reality on the ground, but also of cultural perceptions which are part of that reality and which support it. Here it is obvious that culture broadly supports male promiscuity. The proverb makes it clear:

Mwamuna ndi tonde,	The man is a billy goat,
Azinunkha. ²³	He must prove himself. ["He must stink"]

Not everybody seems to know the proverb. But then initiation teaching may help:

Tsegulire, tsegulire!	Open for me, open for me!
Ndakana, ndakana	I have refused, I have refused.
Apanja, apanja	Those outside, those outside
Mulibe mwambo	Have no behaviour.
Anyumba, anyumba	Those in the house, those in the house
Mulibe mwambo	You do not have behaviour.. ²⁴

If the song is not clear in its support for male promiscuity, the *mlangizi* will make it clear immediately thereafter:

If a man sleeps outside, and comes very late, you should not refuse him entry into the house, do not leave him outside because an animal can kill and eat him. If this happens you will be sorry. *So do not be jealous with your husband.*²⁵

This cultural concept of condoning (if not encouraging) male promiscuity goes hand in hand with strong cultural concepts that a married woman must not exercise any of the freedoms she is taught to accord to her man. While culture is strict with married women, it seems to be more lenient

the Issue of Polygamy in the Synod of Livingstonia: Biblical, Moral and Missiological Implications, PhD, Mzuzu University, 2013).

²³ It is perhaps no coincidence that this proverb, being at the evil edge of moral advice, has not found its way into the collection of 2000 Chinyanja Proverbs (J.C. Chakanza, *Wisdom of the People: 2000 Chinyanja Proverbs*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2000).

²⁴ Rachel NyaGondwe Fiedler, *Coming of Age: A Christianized Initiation among Women in Southern Malawi*, Zomba: Kachere, 2005, p. 82.

²⁵ Ibid. Italics mine.

with women no longer married.²⁶ That culture does not confine sex to marriage is also shown by such cultural practices as *fisi*, *kulowa kufa*, *kuchotsa fumbi* and *kutira mafuta*.²⁷

A lot of victims

The reality on the ground, often supported by cultural perceptions and seemingly sometimes condoned or tolerated by the churches, produces a lot of victims. Most prominent among them (and mostly overlooked by religious arguments) are the faithful wives of less than faithful husbands.²⁸ But the children should not be forgotten either.²⁹ Maybe there are more victims. Even if a woman is not raped, but accepts a man's sexual advances because culture has taught her never to reject any, she is still a victim though she may have consented.

Approaches to morality

To come to any conclusion about the right attitude to condoms outside marriage, we must be clear about the approaches to morality that are possible. I mention only two here.

²⁶ This seems to be supported by the initiation teaching (expressed in song and gestures) that all material things a woman wishes for (food, money, *malata*) come to her through the vagina (Oral information, Rachel Fiedler).—In addition there is the concept of Vitamin K, which is necessary for the good health and survival of every woman, and which can only be acquired through sex, and if there is no husband, a *kachiwala* (grasshopper) will provide the service (Rachel NyaGondwe Banda [Fiedler], *Women of Bible and Culture. Baptist Convention Women in Southern Malawi*, Zomba: Kachere, 2005, p. 188.)

²⁷ These practices may be less frequent in these days of HIV/Aids, but they show clearly that traditional culture does not restrict sex to marriage. The taboo on sexual relations between birth and *kutenga mwana* (*mwambo wa kudikha*) only applies to sex with the wife (who is ritually cold), not to sex with other women (who are ritually equally hot as him). [In some cases *alangizi* recommend that the wife offers her husband non-penetrative sex, but in many cases that is not done. ("He will find his way").

²⁸ Again there is no hard evidence, but if 200,000 people have so far died of Aids, I would not be surprised to find 30,000 such women who got infected by their husbands. Does their plea not cry to heaven?

²⁹ I still remember vividly the funeral of a 9-year-old girl I attended in Blantyre. Her case also cries to heaven, though her aunt (mother's sister) and uncle did all they could to love her and look after her.

(a) *The deductive approach*

The argument is simple. Sex outside marriage is sin (in its totality). Whether condoms are used or not, it is just total sin, and the church has nothing to say except "repent."

(b) *The victim's approach*

This approach listens to the victims' (subdued) voices:

"My husband got himself infected, if he had used condoms in his immorality, I would still be HIV negative."

"I married a widower. He was ever faithful to me, but came into the marriage infected. Now we are both infected, and so is our baby."

Condoms, used by sinners in sinful circumstances, would have made no difference, if the deductive approach is used, but would have brought a big moral benefit (life) to those who did not sin.

The test for a moral proposition

The acid test for any moral proposition is not its deductive logic, but the moral good it achieves. If *life* is one of the highest moral goods,³⁰ a moral proposition that effectively protects life is a valid proposition. Using this test, the deductive moral approach fails. Because the consequences of sexual sin differ with the use or non-use of condoms, the deductive approach does not care about consequences of sin and penalizes the victims.

If (deduced) logic is not considered to be supreme, but moral achievements, the church must remain interested in the consequences even of immoral behaviour. The church must in no way approve immorality, but should attempt to reduce its evil effects and do everything to protect the victims.

If faithfulness in and permanency of marriage is a moral value, the moral teaching of the church should afford all possible protection to a faithful wife.³¹

³⁰ Life is not always the highest moral good, as the church's teaching about martyrdom makes clear. But in our situation here conflicts between life and values that are higher than life is very rare, unless the non-use of condoms is seen as a moral value higher than life.

³¹ Here it would be not appropriate to argue that the unfaithful husband may use condoms with his faithful wife, but not in adultery. Condoms may indeed protect the faithful wife, but it would be better for her not to have sex with her husband always under the threat of infection.

Moral responsibility after sin

Adultery is sin, but consequences vary greatly. If in Germany you are married to a sexually unfaithful spouse, the chances of HIV infection are minimal.³² If you are married to a sexually unfaithful spouse in Malawi, the likelihood that he or she may infect you is very high. It seems to be close to 100%, if both unfaithfulness and marriage continue for a few years.³³ In Germany I counselled a wife in such a situation of promiscuity to keep her marriage (this being a higher value than sexual faithfulness), but in Malawi I would never dare to give that counsel, as it would mean to tell the wife that her life is of lower value than marital faithfulness to an unfaithful husband.

Reduce the consequences, protect the victims

If it is in the church's interest to fight sin, she must also be interested in fighting the consequences of sin. She must not allow the adulterer to abdicate his moral responsibility after he has broken one command ("Once you are an adulterer, it does not matter anymore. If you infect yourself, that is what you deserve. If you infect the woman [or the women] you have sex with, they deserve that too. And if you infect your wife, that is part of marriage, and if she dies before you, that will give you the freedom to marry another woman.")³⁴

Instead the church should promote this message: "Sex outside marriage is sin, everywhere and for everyone. But don't think that that takes away your responsibility. Yes, adultery is wrong, but if you insist on it, that gives you no licence to kill as well. If you use condoms, that does not decrease your sin, but it decreases the evil consequences. It is morally better to commit adultery *and not get infected (and not infect others)*. And if you are infected,³⁵ use condoms not to infect anyone, especially not your wife."³⁶

³² In Germany and other Western European countries the infection rate is far below 1%, and those who are infected mostly belong to clearly identifiable risk groups (like intravenous drug users), which can easily be avoided.

³³ There is word of *a few* cases where the faithful wife was not infected. But these are, if they exist, *very few* cases.

³⁴ According to church law, death of a spouse creates room for a new marriage. Does this also apply if the husband killed his wife? In history that must have been rare cases, with HIV/Aids that is a frequent occurrence. Of course, that is not [premeditated] murder, but still behaviour that causes the wife's death.

³⁵ Infected as probably 15% of all church members are.

With such a moral proposition, the church would not in any way compromise her teaching on sexual morality, and in addition would comply with her own moral teaching to preserve life. To give the wife of an adulterer the right to demand condoms would also strengthen the pastoral advice not to abandon a marriage if one partner is unfaithful.³⁷

A victim's cry

Somewhere in the 1990s, a friend of mine told me of her aunt who said to her: "All the many years of my marriage I have been faithful to my husband, and now I am dying of this dreadful disease." Her polygamous husband seems not to have cared, but condoms (regular and plenty) might have saved her from such a death.³⁸

Do not allow condom use, but demand it!

The church must not allow the sinner to abdicate all further moral responsibility. There is no question of "allowing" the use of condoms outside marriage, the church must demand it outright, because the church is on the side of the victims of moral transgression, not on the side of the perpetrators.³⁹

Condoms offer a realistic chance

The church must take condoms seriously because they offer a chance to preserve and save life. Attempts to discredit them have had no success, and careful research has shown that, though they are no guarantee to avoid infection, they present a very high level of protection. The church therefore cannot ignore them or condemn them as immoral if they have a high chance to preserve the life of victims, perpetrators and the naïve alike.

Any wider considerations?

There is much fear among church leaders and theologians about the wider consequences of allowing/demanding the use of condoms in sinful circum-

³⁶ And don't call her *hule* (prostitute) for asking for a condom! (Cf. Chimwemwe Kalalo, "The Church and Sexual Reproductive Health").

³⁷ That would probably benefit the children as well.

³⁸ Today ARVs might also help her, but in those days they were not yet in sight.

³⁹ If the perpetrators are male, it *sometimes* seems that the church offers too much sympathy.

stances. "If we demand the use of condoms in extramarital sex, do we not open the flood gates to the widest possible sexual immorality?"

Even without the church "allowing" condoms, their indiscriminate use is being promoted widely. Immorality is high, even right in the church,⁴⁰ and there is no evidence that immorality was lower when women were not allowed to wear trousers and before the public promotion of condoms.

That "condoms promote promiscuity" is an argument that has not been proven in any way.⁴¹ The possibility might be there, but this has to be balanced against the proven fact that thousands of sexually faithful wives have died because their husbands did not use condoms. Here I am convinced that the church must give preference to the protection of life⁴² over against the protection of a moral principle.⁴³

Any chance?

Research findings—limited as they are so far—seem to indicate that for most people the only "protection" against infection seems to be fear.

There is little evidence that such fear translates into a more protective sexual behaviour.⁴⁴ There is also little evidence that sexual immorality is being reduced, and there seem to be few changes in attitudes which promote male promiscuity.

⁴⁰ Probably 80% of married women are not sure of their husbands' faithfulness. (More research is required, but even if the figure might turn out to be 40%, that would still be terrible).

⁴¹ Admittedly it is difficult to do research on such issues. Still it would be worth serious research to inquire if such "permission" has encouraged any husband to start promiscuity or to be more promiscuous than before. A separate and different line of inquiry would be to find out (a) if the easy availability of condoms has encouraged youths to become more promiscuous and (b) if Christian teaching on condoms has made a difference for youths in one way or another.

⁴² If the life of a sexually faithful wife is protected, that is also an *effective* protection of the moral principle of sexual faithfulness in marriage.

⁴³ The victims of non-use of condoms can easily be identified, while it would be very difficult to identify the victims of a "diluted moral stance of the church."

⁴⁴ That the infection rate over the last three years or so has been stagnating in Malawi is probably due to the high HIV/Aids death rate. (If all who are infected would suddenly die tomorrow, the infection rate in the population would be zero. But that would be no evidence for morally improved [or more protective] sexual behaviour). *Over the last years some evidence has emerged of improved protective behaviour as a factor in the reduction of HIV/Aids prevalence.

There is also little evidence that condoms are used for any purpose consistently. Nor have I found much evidence that people take heed of the churches' teaching on condoms (either way).⁴⁵

Looking at it from the general level, to allow/demand the use of condoms in circumstances of extramarital sex may not turn the tide, may not even make a big numerical difference. But I am convinced that some difference can be made, that some victims' lives can be saved.

Then the church could rejoice to hear of a *Mvano* woman talking to her friend after her husband's Aids funeral: "I am so glad that he always used condoms with me, and that I am not infected."

⁴⁵ Those who argue that the (Catholic) bishops' condemnation of condoms has greatly contributed to the spread of Aids are mistaken, because who in Malawi (or anywhere else) takes heed of the bishops' teaching on this issue?

3 Compulsory HIV Testing. A Christian Imperative¹

(2007)

Introduction

HIV/AIDS is the most widespread and most devastating illness in Southern Africa. The wave of the pandemic is of tsunami size, and when a tsunami comes the ordinary defenses against the invading forces of nature are often inadequate and new means are needed to come up against an enemy whose magnitude had not been seen before.

As a Christian theologian living in Malawi and having enough relatives and acquaintances who died of Aids, I cannot remain passive, and this is my contribution on the issue of HIV testing.

The right not to know

Under this heading I intend to describe the current situation and the consequences of it in the fight against HIV/Aids.

Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT)

In Malawi (as in almost all other countries) testing for HIV is highly recommended by the medical authorities but a person's consent is required before a test is carried out. This is in line with the current ideology of the World Health Organization, which, on its official website for South East Asia, describes compulsory testing as a "highly coercive, intrusive measure,"² that is "not only pointless but harmful to public health."³

The argument is that compulsory testing is "an invasion of privacy and a violation of human rights."⁴ WHO takes the "right not to know" as part of the right to privacy, as vividly shown on the same website:

If a person tests positive for HIV, it means that he or she has HIV infection and, scientists believe, will ultimately develop AIDS, a fatal disease for which there is at present no cure. But this can take 10 or even 15 years, and some

¹ First published as: Klaus Fiedler, "Compulsory HIV Testing. A Christian Imperative," *Religion in Malawi* no. 14, 2007, pp. 33-39.

² Home page of World Health Organization. Regional Office for South East Asia, "HIV Testing: Policies and Guidelines."

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

people would prefer to live those healthy years without knowing their diagnosis.

Testing may also result in stigmatization:

In addition, people with HIV infection or AIDS can suffer exclusion, discrimination and even persecution.

The argument continues to show that compulsory testing has no point since testing for HIV cannot break the chain of transmission. If someone is tested, there is no medicine that can make her or him HIV negative, and no medicine can make anyone tested to be no longer infectious.⁵ Why?

Because HIV is different. There is no drug available that can cure the infection or make the person uninfected - that is, incapable of transmitting the virus to another person. And once a person is infected with HIV, it's for life. A person who tests positive for syphilis can be cured with a short course of antibiotics. A person diagnosed with tuberculosis can be made uninfected with antibiotics. When someone tests positive for meningitis, the individuals in close contact with him or her can be treated and/or vaccinated. With HIV, there is no medical way to "test and treat" or "test and vaccinate," so as to break the chain of transmission.

This means that the WHO does make room for compulsory measures in public health care, but HIV/Aids does not qualify for such. Only for blood for transfusions and for tissue for organ transplants is testing seen as compulsory.⁶

Is HIV so different?

When I was a school teacher in Germany, I had to go for TB testing every two years. There was nothing voluntary about it, and anyone testing positive would have been treated immediately. Nothing voluntary about that either, and all that with a disease which is extremely rare in Germany.⁷

⁵ Here the *quantitative* point is ignored. Though ARVs do not end infectiousness, they usually reduce it greatly, as the viral load tends towards invisibility after a number of weeks of treatment. *These days the reduction of infectiousness is sometimes estimated at 85%.

⁶ Here the donor also has the right not to know. But when I donated blood at a General Hospital I was given no choice but to hear the results for HIV and Hepatitis. Not that I wanted to remain ignorant, but my (human) "right to privacy" was disregarded.

⁷ I would not know any German in Germany suffering from TB, but I know one German (a missionary nurse) who caught TB in Tanzania.

This German regulation is part of the "Infektionsschutzgesetz" (Law to avoid infections), which also details which vaccinations are compulsory, which illnesses must be registered with the health authorities and in which cases the movements of infected persons must be restricted.⁸

Nothing about this law is voluntary, and it does infringe on the privacy of those that suffer from certain illnesses, but it is designed to save others from infection, from harm (and ultimately protects their right to life).

Testing for HIV also has arguments from medical ethics in its favour. Again there is an example from Germany. A medical doctor who treats a woman of child bearing age must make a pregnancy test even when she refuses saying that she is not pregnant, if that is relevant for an operation to be performed or for specific medication to be administered. For such medically indicated test the doctor does not need to ask for consent, as the test, under specific circumstances, is a required part of medical treatment. The same rules apply in many other cases. A doctor must make all effort and use all available means to treat a patient in the most effective way, and one does not need to know much of medicine to understand that in many cases medical treatment is more effective if the doctor knows whether a patient is HIV positive or not.⁹ When I am ill, a doctor makes all kinds of tests to improve my health, and I see no reason why an HIV test should be restricted to blood donations,¹⁰ as the HIV status knowledge is fundamental to many treatments a doctor can give. This means that there are many

⁸ When I suffered from (a mild form of) chicken pox, the doctor told me not to teach the teenagers in my church. When I suffered from scarlet fever (without realizing it for most of the time), I was not given any restrictions, but I remembered that my father, before I was born, was isolated in hospital for 6 weeks severely ill (and a danger to the public).

⁹ Though 80% of all TB patients are estimated to be HIV positive, a patient can refuse to be tested. To make matters worse, often TB patients are neither counselled about the relationship between the two diseases nor is testing (VCT) offered to them. *Both these misconceptions have been rectified since.

¹⁰ Sometimes doctors disregard the "human right to privacy" and go ahead testing. I know of a young woman with shingles who was tested as part of her treatment (as it is rare to suffer from shingles under the age of 50 without being HIV positive) and I know of another woman living in a household with a small child who was sick for some time and was tested for both TB and HIV simply as part of her treatment. Would she have had a right to refuse being tested for one or the other of the illnesses? And if so, what kind of right would that be, a legal right or a moral right?

medical reasons for testing, and such reasons apply even if a patient opts for the right not to know.

The consequences

What supposedly distinguishes HIV from other infectious diseases is that you can avoid infection by following proper behaviour as always outlined: Abstain, be faithful, and if you want to do neither, make sure you practice safer sex (ABC). Or, to express it a bit more colloquially, "you do not get Aids but you fetch it." To a certain level it is true that HIV infections are due to voluntary risk taking, but other scenarios do not support the claim:

(1) If a baby is infected at birth, sure, the little one did nothing to fetch the infection. But maybe the baby's infection can be accepted due to the right to privacy (of the mother? of the father?).

(2) In marriage a sexually faithful wife is often infected by her promiscuous husband. Within the HIV/Aids discourse she may be seen as possessing the human right of divorce, refusing sex to her husband or demanding a condom every time they have sex. In reality it is almost impossible for a wife to make use of her ascribed human rights. In addition there are also cases where the wife is convinced that her husband is sexually faithful to her when in fact he is not. So a woman's only way out would be to avoid marriage (and all sex).¹¹ But culturally a wife cannot refuse sex to her husband (with specific exceptions).¹² If she does that, it is considered to be gender-based violence (GBV, *Nkhanza*). In the Western world women are said to have more power over their own sexuality,¹³ but that cannot be assumed in Africa. Here culture forces women to be exposed to HIV without complaining.¹⁴ The husband's right not to know (and to live

¹¹ Medically that may be sound advice, as marriage is the biggest single health risk in many countries.

¹² Such as menstruation (since her menstrual blood has the power to kill the husband), after childbirth before *kutenga mwana* (*kudika*), when the child is sick or the mother is travelling or any other sexual abstinence taboo she has to follow (these vary greatly depending on the cultural context).

¹³ But since HIV/Aids is rare over there, this assumption has not been tested on any larger scale.

¹⁴ *On instructions that marriage "is to persevere" see this song: *Banja Ndikupilira* (Marriage is Perseverance):

Ukwatiwu ngoyera

Musati mudzalekane (3x)

This wedding is holy

So do not divorce

his remaining [healthy?] years in blissful ignorance) may well kill the wife. I consider this as too high a price for protecting the right to privacy. Such a right seems to me, in these circumstances (as well as in the case of babies) more like an inhuman right than a human right.

(3) The case needs to be extended, though, to other cases of extramarital relations. Cases of rape are not frequent, but they occur in every society. It is of course right to admonish the rapist not to infect anyone else ("if you are infected, do not infect others"), or to at least use a condom. Such admonitions, however, may only offer little protection to the victim, and the victim's human right to health is severely disregarded (to protect privacy).

(4) In other cases of premarital or extramarital sex, technically the consent of both parties may be there ("sex between consenting adults"), but in a society where sexual relations are often power relations in disguise, the weaker partner in such relationships (most frequently the female one) has limited power of protecting herself and her rights. Unquestioned submission to patriarchal dominance is taught both for wives and for other women.

(5) To these victims of "human rights" there might be added those cases where the infection occurs in a "mechanical" way like through blood contact in a car accident, through blood transfusion,¹⁵ or through accidents in medical work, none of which is voluntary either.

Overall this means that the right to privacy—in a substantial number of cases—severely infringes on the right to life, and those who, in the defence of the right to privacy, lose their right to life are more frequently female than male.

Alekerenji kulekana aye (2x). ¹⁴	Why should they divorce?
Kapilire nkunka iweko (2x)	Persevere where you are going
Kumeneko kuli ana eeh	There are children there yeah
Amamina eeh	With mucus yeah
Osasamba eeh	Unbathed yeah
Kapilire, kapilire nkunka iweko.	Persevere, persevere where you are going

(Towera Mwase, *The Marriage Instructions for Girls and Women in Mzuzu Churches*, MA, Mzuzu University, 2012, p. 106.)

¹⁵ That was frequent in the early years, but even now, when all blood is screened, the infection cannot be found during the "window period," up to six weeks after the initial infection, since there are no antibodies yet available to react to the test.

The morality of compulsory testing

The Christian church does not have the power to coerce moral behaviour nor does she have the power to punish offenders. But the churches have power to support moral behaviour and to heal offenders. Though, in one way, the church can only make moral claims for her own members, in another way she also has the power to make claims for the benefit of society, pursuing the common good.¹⁶ The moral considerations in this chapter are valid foremost within the church, but have validity also beyond the church in society in general.

The value of life

Though in Christian ethics the right to life is not absolute,¹⁷ it is one of the highest moral values. Therefore the church has to weigh values. Privacy, somewhat a newcomer among the human rights, is a lower value than life. I am convinced that to refuse compulsory testing reduces the right to life of many.

Derived from the high value of life is the value of health and wholeness. After all, Jesus was a healer and Luke was a medical doctor, and the churches carry on both ministries in many different ways.

Think of the case of Mr L., who came to a serious personal faith after many years of being anything but a faithful Christian. One Sunday afternoon he felt a headache and even on Monday he was not able to come to work. Five weeks later he was buried in his home village, where a good number of people attributed his death to witchcraft.¹⁸ But during his last week in hospital (and in life) he tested HIV positive. His wife (soon to be his widow) was not to be told. Because of his exemplary Christian life (after repentance) he had a great funeral service. That is fine, but he should not have died. He lived in a surrounding where all the facts about HIV/Aids

¹⁶ Sometimes the term "prophetic ministry" is used. I am not so happy with the term since it might be understood that the church's critique of society is the direct divine voice.

¹⁷ Martyrdom is a case where life is not the highest value. Martyrdom is valued so highly because one of the highest values is offered in exchange for a still higher value. The high value of life is supported by the church's teaching that nobody must seek martyrdom and by Jesus' advice to run away when they persecute you.

¹⁸ His wife's former husband is supposed to have said something to the amount of "he will see."

were known to him, where testing was available in walking distance, but he did not do the obvious. Compulsory testing would quite likely have saved his life, as he never had any opportunistic infections until five weeks before his death.¹⁹ I am convinced that he would not have run away to Mozambique to safeguard his privacy or gone underground within the country.²⁰ If compulsory testing could have saved him, it should have been supported as promoting the right to live.

No right to destroy life

Since life is such a high value, Christian ethics do not allow attempts to destroy life like suicide or euthanasia.²¹ To refuse testing is not suicide. But it has in common with it that a person allows his or her life to be destroyed when there are alternatives. The church cannot force someone who prefers to die not to do so, but should make all effort to dissuade people from pursuing their own death.²² Compulsory testing would have found him out, destroyed his privacy and probably saved his life.

The insistence on VCT alone not only gives a chance to destroy one's own life, but also a chance to destroy other lives, all in the name of privacy. Though there is no cure for Aids and though there is no means to wipe out infectiousness, since the arrival of ARVs there is a high chance to reduce infectiousness by medical treatment, and an HIV test is the unavoidable entrance requirement. If a person has the right to refuse treatment for himself, that might be approved in Christian ethics, but then there would have to be the certainty that he never has sex again with anyone for the

¹⁹ This case also dispels the assumption that when the first symptoms show it is the time to start thinking about ARV treatment. Five weeks are not enough for that.

²⁰ There is much fear among Aids specialists in Europe that compulsory testing would lead to people migrating out of reach or going underground.

²¹ The right to kill in war and the death penalty are left here out of consideration, since they present special challenges not relevant to the discussion of the right to life.

²² Here the case of Mr. N comes to my mind. He knew all about HIV, Aids and ARVs, and in a speech to which I was a witness he encouraged everyone to get tested and be treated. A few months later he fell ill, first on and off, then seriously, and until his dying day he refused to see the possibility that he was sick with Aids (though he saw the possibility that witches had a role in his troubles).

rest of his life.²³ But since Christian ethics is the "art of the possible,"²⁴ such pious hopes may not carry much weight.

Weigh the values!

The church (and society) must choose when values are in conflict. Privacy is a value that should not be taken lightly.²⁵ I do not propose that the church should object to the confidentiality of the postal service or the phone lines,²⁶ but where the right to privacy conflicts with the right to life, a clear stand must be taken for life as the higher value. Such a stand can be taken by supporting compulsory testing.

The motives

It is not easy to be precise on the motives which make a person refuse to be tested. Surely one motive is fear, not supported in any way by Christian ethics. Neither is shame a motive that could be supported.²⁷

Another argument that lends strength to refuse testing is patriarchy, again a value that has no Christian or biblical support. In the beginning God created them equal (Gen 1:27 and 2:23), and only after the fall (as a consequence of sin), male dominance came in (Gen 3:16).²⁸ But be that as it may, in reality cultural precepts are often equated with Christian values, male dominance being no exception. This leads to the cultural perception that a wife must be faithful in her marriage,²⁹ but not her husband in the same marriage.³⁰ And patriarchy can make men (male men) proud so that they

²³ There is of course a chance to infect someone without sex, but that is very small.

²⁴ Dr Hans Luckey, my Ethics teacher at the Baptist Seminary in Hamburg in the early 1960s.

²⁵ I do not propose that the church should object to the

²⁶ There are still very specific exceptions even to this law, where a judge can allow the tapping of phones to fight criminal activity.

²⁷ In Genesis 3:7 (cf. 2:25) shame is seen as the first result of the original sin. To reject shame as a motive, of course, does not allow anyone to put others to shame or to cause them to fear.

²⁸ "Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you." Here sin turns a good thing (her desire) into a bad thing (his dominance).

²⁹ She must never initiate sex, not even with her husband.

³⁰ *Mwamuna ndi tonde azinunkha.*

see no need for testing.³¹ Patriarchy also gives them the right to refuse "to eat a sweet with its wrapper" and thereby the right to kill the provider of the sweet.

None of these motives against testing can be supported by Christian ethics, and therefore the right to ignorance must quickly be deleted from any catalogue of (Christian) human rights, as such ignorance in the case of HIV is not blissful but kills.

Compulsory testing

The church cannot compel the state, but for moral reasons the church can demand compulsory testing. She can demand it for its members (and that is where the demanding should start!) and for society as a whole. To promote life is good, and a life beyond HIV may give a sinner an extra chance to repent.

Compulsory testing and treatment

One of the arguments against compulsory testing is that there is no cure for HIV/Aids and that mere testing has a chance to make some people unhappy or even expose them to discrimination. It would indeed be evil to demand testing without offering any improvement of the situation. That was the situation until a few years ago, but now that the ARVs are not only available but available for free (at least in Malawi), and as their management is not difficult any more, there is a chance for everyone, though not to get healed, but to achieve a major improvement that shows in the extension of life, in the improvement of health and in the reduction of infectiousness. This means that after a compulsory test something better will come, and that is not only true but also easily observable, once enough people who are infected share their stories.

The gap in ARV coverage

When the free ARVs were introduced in Malawi, it was estimated that above 180,000 people were in need of immediate ARV treatment. Unfortunately the discovery rate was slow, so that after two years about 60,000 patients were registered, against 5000 before the start of the free

³¹ In the Lydia Project in Zomba the number of women who go for testing is clearly higher than the number of men (Information Rachel Fiedler).

programme.³² This was a great achievement for the health services and even more so for the patients, but there are still twice that number who have not been included. There are of course multiple reasons for that, my argument is only that compulsory testing would have by now measurably reduced the gap. It would have reduced individual freedom, but it would have saved lives. It is claimed that all the condoms in Malawi annually save 15,000 people from infection.³³ I am not able to make a claim how many lives compulsory testing could save, but if combined with compulsory treatment, it must be a measurable and sizable number.³⁴

No easy logistics

It is clear to me that the logistics of compulsory testing are not easy. But that must not confuse the argument. If human rights stand against compulsory testing, that applies whether the logistics for it are available or not. And if compulsory testing is necessary, it is even more necessary now, when, currently, it is impossible to implement it.

What the church can do

The church cannot implement compulsory testing

Though the church can and needs to demand compulsory testing, it does not have the power to implement it. True as that is, the church must not sit back idly, feeling happy that she has uttered the right prophetic words. So what could the church do? The answer would be to make testing as comprehensive as possible.

Teaching

Up to now the churches have often been timid or shy in their approach to HIV/Aids. And though they cannot enforce it, they can make testing and

³² Such figures are all a bit of an educated guess, but even if they are wrong by 10 or 20%, the picture remains basically the same.

³³ Web site of PSI International. I am not able to verify the calculations, which do have a scientific base, so it may be good to accept them. But probably one person was saved several times from infection?

³⁴ Though I cannot give a scientific or semi-scientific estimate, I know enough people who are doing well on ARVs, some of them having been much closer to death before they started the drug.

treatment a *moral* duty. This will not always be adhered to, in line with other moral injunctions, but if clearly taught, many will take note of it. Such teaching, of course, is insufficient if a Synod just approves a document to that extent at one of its overcrowded sessions, no, arrangements must be made for it to be promoted right in the parishes and prayer houses. This again will not reach everyone, but the churches have by far the best grassroots organization in the rural areas.³⁵ To me it is important that the teaching on comprehensive testing is transmitted not as part of a social programme but as part of the moral teaching of the church. And such teaching makes the demand to be tested (and treated) as a moral responsibility (to oneself and to the neighbour³⁶), not as a voluntary activity.

Doing

Teaching is necessary, but it gains its strength by doing things. Here the Baptist Seminary in Lilongwe may serve as an example. All students have to attend a compulsory course for one period each week over one academic year dealing with all aspects of HIV/Aids. That seems good teaching to me, and it is made much better by the practice that all students go for testing. In the first group of eight there is always the Principal and his wife, who is equally a lecturer at the Seminary. The testing is not compulsory as there are no sanctions against those who refuse, but it is comprehensive since everyone is expected to go.³⁷ And though testing is comprehensive, disclosure of results is voluntary.

The situation in the Seminary is easier, but even congregations can work on comprehensive testing, with the pastor and the elders always in the first group to go. If everyone is to go (even if some refuse or manage to hide), the moral appeal is there, and many will comply.

This teaching, that testing and treatment are a moral obligation, must start early and must be promoted within and through the various groupings in the church. However, it must not be relegated to them as it is everyone's moral obligation.

³⁵ This does not apply to strong Islamic areas, but here the mosques could play the same role as the churches in the predominantly Christian areas.

³⁶ The first of such "neighbours" would be one's spouse, the next "neighbours" would be the children in the house, irrespective of their origin.

³⁷ At the last course one student managed to hold out against testing.

What about weddings?

It is not the first time that it has been proposed that the churches should rule that before a wedding a couple has to undergo a double HIV test. However, since church weddings rarely constitute a marriage and often are just a mere social afterthought, I doubt the strength of the idea since it is strong in intention but probably poor on the implementation level.³⁸ Some improvement could be achieved if the churches would recognize traditional weddings as initiating a real marriage,³⁹ but even then sex frequently starts before. Therefore it is insufficient to concentrate the issue of comprehensive testing on marriage.

If the state refuses

Possibilities

Given the current ideological positions and the inadequacy of the state's resources, I do not expect that in the near future the government will introduce compulsory testing nationwide. Unfortunately. So, if the health system cannot and will not reach everyone, a start should be made with those whose symptoms, medically or socially, are most pronounced. Not much medical knowledge is required to see where the possibilities are:

(1) TB: Doctors tell me that in Malawi about 80% of all TB patients are also HIV positive. There have been many complaints in the papers in recent years that TB in Southern Africa is on the rise. However, it is really HIV not TB. Since the connection is so well known, it is medically irresponsible to treat TB patients ignoring the probability that their illness has been caused or enhanced by HIV. With such obvious probability testing cannot be voluntary any more but must be made compulsory so as to protect the life of the TB patients and their sexual partners.⁴⁰

³⁸ Though I see no overall success, such a rule may help the rare couples who start their sexual relationship on their wedding day, and it may catch some of the latecomers who had forgotten their duty but want a church wedding as a social achievement and maybe willing to be tested to achieve that.

³⁹ Some denominations do this, some with a bad conscience like my Baptist Convention, which sometimes tries to put church weddings (*ukwati wodalitsa*) on people, be it after ever so many years of marriage.

⁴⁰ For TB patients voluntarism is not the only hindrance to save their lives, the other is the current Malawian medical ideology that TB and HIV cannot be treated together. A girl in our congregation who was doing quite well on ARVs was discov-

(2) Shingles: Without HIV shingles is an illness of age. For anyone contracting it under the age of 55 or so, HIV is the likely cause. Here again comprehensive testing is required.

(3) Recurrent illnesses: To be sick again and again (*akudwala on-off*) is another symptom that is not exclusively HIV induced, but in so many cases that compulsory testing should equally be introduced here.

In all the three cases the medical symptoms are probable enough to deny a person the "right to ignorance." If compulsory testing and treatment can save the life of a mother, it is a moral requirement to do all that is possible to avoid the children becoming orphans. And if a man is found with any of these symptoms, it is a medical and moral necessity to do all that is possible to prevent him from infecting his wife (and maybe other women he has sex with).

In all these situations the primary responsibility lies with the medical system, but as well with the churches, by way of teaching and counselling, and by the proven way of a good example. In addition the church should look at "social" symptoms and act accordingly:

(1) Death of a spouse: Most deaths in the reproductive age range are, these days in Malawi, due to Aids. Therefore the church must teach (by word and example) that the surviving spouse must, as soon as the mourning is over, immediately be tested and treated.

(2) Orphans: Since most deaths of parents are nowadays caused by Aids, a congregation receiving orphans must immediately (and gently) check the circumstances and take to testing and treatment all who are required to do so.

ered to have TB. The ARVs were withdrawn immediately to have her TB treated first. As a result she deteriorated rapidly, being condemned to death to follow medical ideology. She duly died within a few months. In other countries TB and HIV are treated simultaneously with good results, as recommended by the World Health Organization. But when the WHO sent a delegate to Malawi to achieve the same results here, he was told by the head of the TB section that 'as everywhere in the world, in Malawi we always treat TB first and HIV after that' and that the WHO should first bring to Malawi the necessary scientific literature to prove that both illnesses can be treated together. (I know that some doctors outside the system even in Malawi treat both TB and HIV successfully together.) For death certificates a new category under "cause of death" should be included: "death due to medical ideology." *This has changed since I wrote the article. Even in Malawi HIV and TB can now be treated together. The World Health Organization pushed for this.

Experiences

Outside Malawi many attempts are being made to replace the concept of voluntary counselling and testing with something that catches better those that are infected and need treatment. Such concepts are called "mandatory testing" or "opt-out testing" or "provider-induced testing" or "routine testing." This means that under specific circumstances every patient is offered to be tested. It is not exactly voluntary since the right to refuse is the lowest level of voluntarism, but in such efforts most patients agree to be tested and high levels of infection are usually diagnosed. The policy, since 2004 supported by a joint UNAIDS and WHO guidance makes the HIV test a "routine part of medical care" and sees the HIV test "as the gateway to HIV treatment and an essential component of prevention programmes."⁴¹

After introducing a routine test offer in 2005, the Machakos District Hospital [in Kenya] counselled 2394 patients, of whom 90% chose to test. Fifty-seven per cent were HIV-positive. Of these, 566 (46%) began antiretroviral therapy, as compared to 273 patients who had been identified as eligible for antiretroviral therapy as a result of voluntary counselling and testing.

To me to find an extra 566 patients and save or improve their lives is a result worth recording.

In Kenya there have also been efforts to integrate TB and HIV care, using the same "opt-out provider induced approach." This was done in Nyanza Province in Western Kenya, that has 20% of all known TB cases in Kenya.

The programme began with a pilot [study] at Nyanza General Hospital in 2004, where 1001 TB patients received treatment. Patients were offered an opt-out HIV test with a same day result, and pre-test counselling emphasized the importance of diagnosing HIV infection for the patient's medical care at the TB clinic. Sixty-eight per cent received counselling, of whom 83% chose to undergo HIV-testing. Of those who tested 81% were HIV-positive.

The way forward

VCT obviously, in spite of all good intentions, does not deliver the goods required to deal with the most devastating pandemic in Southern Africa

⁴¹ "Routine or opt-out counselling and testing: findings from the 2006 PEPFAR meeting" (HIV in Site on the web.)

within human memory. Since all are either infected or affected, I propose compulsory testing, and for a compromise, mandatory opt-out testing may be a candidate. My aim is not to protect privacy but life.

4 The Cross and the Resurrection¹

(2010)

When I came to Malawi as a missionary of the German Association of Protestant Missions and Churches, for political reasons I did not get the house which I expected to get. So I decided that it would be better to have a small house built for me than to pay rent for years. It took eight months



to build the house, and during this time I was welcomed to live in St. Peter's Catholic Seminary, of which the Jesuits were in charge. During the morning services in the chapel two carvings always impressed me. On the right side there was the statue of the Virgin Mary (a young black woman), pregnant and showing that she was happy about that. (To show happiness about a pregnancy is considered by many in Malawi as not appropriate, as the spirits might become envious and kill the child).

Even more I was impressed by the altar carving, which showed Jesus on the cross, dying and rising, and that on the same cross, carved as the Tree of Life.

In the whole Bible we find the Tree of Life at the very beginning of the Bible (Genesis 2:9 and 3:21) and at the very end (Revelation 22:2). John Mbiti, the famous African theologian and for two years my teacher in Kampala (Makerere), pointed out in a little book of his, that in between the beginning and the end of the Bible, the Tree of Life appears once more, right in the middle: the Cross. The Cross is really the tree of death, but Jesus' resurrection transformed it into the Tree of Life. Resurrection and Cross belong together. Without his resurrection Jesus would have been a martyr, not a Saviour, and without the cross Jesus would have been no more than a visiting teacher and moral advisor from another world.

¹ First published as: Klaus Fiedler, "Das Kreuz und Ostern. Überlegungen zu einem spannungsreichen Verhältnis," *Die Gemeinde*, 7/2010, pp. 6-7.

Exactly that was the great, possibly the greatest temptation of the Christians during the first two centuries: to worship a Jesus who was not allowed to suffer and who, indeed, could not suffer. Such was the teaching of the Gnostics ("Men of Knowledge"). The Gnosis was a widespread philosophical system (or to be precise: several systems), basically pagan, but sometimes a little more Christian, which taught that the Logos, the (divine) Word, came to redeem men. They also taught that God can not suffer. And that is the conflict: Jesus may well be the Logos (and John emphasizes exactly that), and just like the Gnostics saw it, he was the great teacher of divine knowledge. But the Gnostics could not understand how the Logos, God's Eternal Word, could die. That would not fit into their philosophical system, according to which God could not suffer. But Jesus had gone to the cross and had accepted to die there. No one could deny this fact, it could only be re-interpreted. The Gnostics saw Jesus as the divine Word, but since God can not suffer, Jesus did not die, and therefore his death cannot redeem us. Therefore they taught, that God did not become completely human, but took upon himself a human body (like a gown), and before the suffering at the cross began, the Logos quietly moved out of that body so that what the Romans (on request of the Jewish leaders) then finally killed, was only the empty shell, the cast away gown. That confirmed their philosophy and that made them lose the salvation which God (and not an empty shell) had wrought on the cross.

It is interesting that this Gnostic concept is later found reflected in the Qur'an, which says that the Jews did not crucify Jesus but someone who looked like him (maybe Simon of Cyrene, whom the Roman soldiers had forced to carry Jesus' cross?). If Jesus, God's Word, did not himself die, then he can be a prophet who proclaims God's will, then he can be a teacher, who shows the right way, but he cannot be a Redeemer.

John knew what mattered when he wrote his gospel. In order to reach the Greeks, he speaks of Jesus as the Logos. When he says that the Word was in the beginning, and that it (better: he) was with God in the beginning, and was indeed God, every Gnostic could understand that. Maybe John could, in this way, win some of them. I am sure that he wanted this, but he made sure that he would not be misunderstood. So he wrote: And the Word became flesh (John 1:14). The divine Logos became really human, and 20 chapters down the line, he describes how this very Logos (fully God and fully human) died at the cross.

We all know the proverb: "everyone has to bear his little cross." Nothing against some common wisdom, but Jesus did not just bear his "little cross," he died at the cross. And when, before his death, he taught his disciples

about carrying the cross, he did not speak of little sufferings, but of those sufferings that we need to carry because of the name of Jesus. Persecutions for the name of Jesus are rare here. But sufferings are common, often brought about by someone else. How many of them there are, nobody knows, but there are far too many wives here, HIV positive, infected by their husbands, who, not many years before, had promised, in the presence of God and his church, to be ever faithful to them. Marriage became for them a deadly cross. I think of a woman, who, during the last days of her life, wrote a kind of diary. In this diary she wrote down that she forgave her husband. I do not know if the husband accepted the forgiveness, but I know that for her the cross turned into resurrection.

5 The "Smaller" Churches and Big Government¹

(1995)

The Three-fold Face of Christianity in Africa

When Christianity came to Sub-Saharan Africa, it was far from being a monolithic bloc. While there was much cooperation among the various Protestant missions,² Catholics and Protestants were more of competitors than colleagues.³ Since the second half of the 19th century many African Instituted Churches have sprung up. In the beginning they were often seen as "hardly Christian," but since the 1950s they have increasingly been accepted as genuine Christian churches. This threefold face of Christianity in Africa is the major organizing principle of Adrian Hastings' *History of African Christianity*. He divides African Christianity into three groups: Protestant mission churches, Catholic mission churches and Independent churches.⁴ Against Hastings I contend that the church in Africa has at least a fourfold face. It is not good enough to lump all Protestants together, because in doing so the "bigger" churches are usually taken to stand for the lot.

This other group among the Protestants goes by various names, and is in most countries the smaller group. Since small is—at least sometimes—beautiful, and since it is the researcher's task to come as close to reality as possible, I have, for several years, concentrated on these churches in Africa,

¹ First published as Klaus Fiedler, "The 'Smaller' Churches and Big Government," in: Matembo S. Nzunda; Kenneth R. Ross (eds): *Church, Law and Political Transition in Malawi 1992 - 1994*. Kachere Book No. 1. Gweru: Mambo 1995, pp. 153-170.

² This was often expressed in "comity agreements," informal or formal arrangements that would allot a certain territory exclusively (as far as Protestants were concerned), to one mission, so that there would be no competition. The Africans were supposed "to be saved from the historical divisions of European Christianity which mean nothing to them" and the missionaries from competition. Such comity agreements were countrywide in Congo for example, but in Malawi only existed between the three Presbyterian/Reformed missions. Anglicans and Evangelicals did not accept these imposed borders.

³ The Roman Catholic Church never accepted comity agreements, unless imposed by government.

⁴ Adrian Hastings, *A History of African Christianity 1950 - 1975*, Cambridge et al.: CUP, 1986 (1979), p. 2.

which sometimes here in Malawi are collectively called "the smaller churches." Size is not necessarily a permanent criterion, but origins might be. Therefore, I have tried to describe the fourth face of Christianity in Africa by its distinct origins.

All Protestant missionary activity in Africa originated in revivals of religion in the West. The most important of them was the "Great Awakening," which began in 1734 and which became a major missionary force by 1792.⁵ Because these missions played the greatest role in changing the religious landscape of Africa (and beyond) I have called them the "classical missions." The classical Protestant churches are represented in Malawi by the CCAP (originating from three Presbyterian and Reformed missions) and by the Anglican Church. The majority of the Catholic missions in Africa come from a Catholic Revival parallel to the Great Awakening, so I include them into the group of "classical missions/churches." Reliable statistics are hard to come by, but the classical churches may comprise about 70% of all Christians in Malawi. The remaining 30% are divided between the African Instituted Churches and what I call the post-classical churches.

The post-classical churches originated in later revivals: the Restorationist Revival of the 1830s, the Holiness Revival of 1859/1873, the Pentecostal Revival of 1906 and the Charismatic Revival of the 1960s.⁶ Their differences cannot be seen only in their different historical origins, but also in attitudes and relationships. The post-classical churches are in their homelands minority churches, whereas the classical churches are usually the "national church." The post-classical churches insist on separation of church and state, the classical churches gladly accept various forms of "establishment," if available. Finally, the post-classical churches see human society usually in a less positive light than the classical churches do.

⁵ 1792 was marked by the publication of William Carey's *An Enquiry into the Obligation of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen*, Leicester: Ann Ireland, 1792, and by the founding of the Baptist Missionary Society (then: Particular Baptist Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Heathen). 1792 is usually taken as the year that ushered in the "Great Century" of Missions (K.S. Latourette) 1792-1914.

⁶ Among the post-classical churches in Malawi I include those churches which in other parts of Africa are classical churches, but which follow in Malawi a post-classical pattern (like Baptists, Lutherans and Moravians).

Here and elsewhere I argue that these churches are different enough to warrant separate study,⁷ and this chapter attempts to pursue this aim in relation to the process of political change that started in Malawi with the publication of the Lenten Pastoral Letter of the Catholic Bishops on 8 March 1992.

General perceptions

Though the post-classical churches are rarely clearly defined, there are some quite widespread perceptions as to their peculiarities. I summarize and list some of them here:

1. They are conservative—therefore they support the status quo.
2. They keep out of politics—therefore they have no prophetic voice.
3. They are after individual salvation only—therefore they are not interested in the improvement of society.
4. They are chiefly interested in the hereafter—therefore they support the powers that be as long as they are in this world.

This basically negative picture, logical as it may sound, does not necessarily match reality, and in this paper I want to check it against reality in Malawi, concentrating on one issue (political involvement) and on one point in time (the Pastoral Letter and its consequences).⁸

Limitations to post-classical participation in politics

The post-classical churches are quite varied, but some generalizations may be attempted.

1. The post-classical churches are usually small. Therefore their chance to influence political processes is small, too. What influence can a

⁷ First put forward for missions in: Klaus Fiedler, *Ganz auf Vertrauen, Geschichte und Kirchenverständnis der Glaubensmissionen*, Brunnen Verlag Gießen/Basel 1992, 12-35. *Out of print, but available on <http://tinyurl.com/fiedler>. The English version is: *The Story of Faith Missions*. Regnum/Lynx: Oxford, 1994; also Albatross Books, Southerland NSW Australia, 1994; Reprinted by Regnum Books Int., 1995, with the subtitle: *From Hudson Taylor to Present Day Africa*.

⁸ As archival material is not yet accessible, I have to rely on limited and uneven material, in which oral sources and newspapers play a major role.

denomination like the Free Methodists with about 7000 communicant members, spread over all the three regions of Malawi, effectively exert?⁹

2. Many of the post-classical churches have congregationalist structures of church government, like the Baptists and, much more strictly, the Churches of Christ. For the Churches of Christ there just is no higher authority than the local congregation, and even though the Baptists, while insisting on local church autonomy, do have a national "convention," this is a comparatively weak structure, with very limited possibilities of the leadership speaking for the church.¹⁰ In Baptist churches political involvement therefore is most likely to take not corporate but individual forms, with the local congregation's support deciding whether an individual political initiative can be seen as "just personal" or as "Baptist."

3. Some of the post-classical churches, for theological reasons, do not join interdenominational organizations like the Christian Council of Malawi. Therefore they have not shared in the CCM's political witness, which the government may have taken as support for its policies. Here the Seventh-day Adventists are the most important case,¹¹ but neither do the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches belong to the Christian Council.

4. Churches with a very strong doctrine of separation of state and church are usually not keen on publicly commenting on political and social issues. They are also most likely not to have sister churches abroad who would do this for them, like the Church of Scotland did for the CCAP in 1992

⁹ That this is already different with the Seventh-day Adventists with about 150,000 full members (and growing fast) is shown by the MCP's attempts to woo them in 1993.

¹⁰ The Executive Committee can make statements as the Executive Committee, but "resolutions or statements are non-binding."

¹¹ There would be some reason to include the Jehovah's Witnesses here as even more extreme among the post-classical churches. Their political involvement (and consequent immense suffering) was caused by their strict policy not to involve themselves in politics (not even by buying [one-] party cards). The Jehovah's Witnesses could be included under post-classical churches because they probably had their early roots in the same Restorationist Revival (1830s) as the Seventh-day Adventists, the Churches of Christ, the Christian Brethren and Apostolic Church (Irvingites). But the Jehovah's Witnesses on their side do not have fellowship with any of the post-classical churches, and these in turn consider them as "sects" or as "marginal." This ("Pmar") is also the classification which David Barrett uses for them in the World Christian Encyclopedia.

Post-classical political involvement through the Christian Council of Malawi

On 8 March 1992 the Pastoral Letter was read in all Catholic parishes.¹² In June the CCAP and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches Commission demanded that government institutionalize dialogue, and when nothing seemed to happen, in August 1992 the CCM wrote to the President demanding a referendum and criticizing some abuses of power. For the standards of that time this was a very strong action, lining up most Protestant denominations behind the Catholics. This letter was signed by all member churches of the CCM, classical and post-classical alike. The post-classical signatories were: Baptist Convention of Malawi; Evangelical Lutheran Church; Zambezi Evangelical Church; Free Methodist Church; African Methodist Episcopal Church, and Providence Industrial Mission (African Baptist Assemblies). Later one of the two signatories from the (classical) Nkhoma Synod withdrew his signature with apologies to the Ngwazi.¹³ However, none of the post-classical representatives did. Neither did the post-classical churches outside the CCM express any support for the one-party state. The post-classical member churches of the CCM also signed the November 1992 letter to the President, demanding that fairness be applied to the referendum process, that all harassment should be stopped and that all prisoners of conscience be released.¹⁴ The leadership of these churches in general supported the CCM political stance.¹⁵ This I was personally able to witness when I had the privilege of attending a CCM Heads of Churches meeting in Blantyre,¹⁶ where classical and post-classical Heads of Churches alike simply did not call the Life President "Life President." The general tone and content of their discussion showed an equally refreshing lack of deference to political authority.

¹² *For the context and the history see Angela Hanley, *Justified by Faith. An Irish Missionary Experience in Malawi*, Kiltegan: St. Patrick's Missionary Society, 2002.— Three of the over 800 priests did not read the letter.

¹³ The signature of the official representative of Nkhoma Synod was never withdrawn, but the withdrawal of the one signature seems to have been accepted by all parties as representing the real attitude of the Synod, which was therefore suspended from CCM.

¹⁴ The Christian Council of Malawi - The Life President Ngwazi Dr. H. Kamuzu Banda, 4.11.1992.

¹⁵ Explicitly stated in Int Rev Chipuliko, Providence Industrial Mission, 8.1993.

¹⁶ All agreed that it was a law made and now to be repealed by the MCP, not a law to be repealed due to the process of transition to democracy.

After this view from the CCM perspective I would like to draw attention to individual churches.

The Baptist Convention of Malawi

True to its customary attitude, the Baptists did not issue a public statement of any kind. But their democratic form of church government was seen in a new light as soon as the changes began:

In fact in the old system Baptists were out of place since democracy is the form of church government that has been identified with our heritage.¹⁷

That they were out of place in the old system had been shown to at least some Baptists quite clearly before the Pastoral Letter. In two cases of internal dissent, which involved property¹⁸ or position,¹⁹ the "defeated" group appealed to the MCP for help, which duly accepted the privilege of offering that help. In Zomba the party chairman acted highhandedly and violently against the congregation. In Blantyre the chairman and vice-chairman of the local association²⁰ and the general secretary of the Baptist Convention were summoned to the MCP office for correction. When they refused to accept MCP guidance, they were threatened that the church building would be turned into a CCAM office. One of the participants is still today convinced that only the Pastoral Letter, which came out a few days after this "educational conference," saved them from further trouble.²¹

The issue of his attitude to a dictatorial government became very personal for Rev Akim Chirwa, pastor of Soche Baptist Church in Blantyre. He heard from a friend that the AFORD pressure group was to be founded, but that the founders were in need of a place for the inaugural meeting

¹⁷ The Baptist Convention of Malawi 1993 Annual Report, p. 1.

¹⁸ A congregation not very far from Blantyre wanting to leave the Baptist Convention and join another denomination (no problem about that), but also wanting to take the church building with them, which was the property of the Baptist Convention.

¹⁹ In Zomba Pastor Gama fell foul with his congregation in 1992. He was also under discipline of the Convention for having squandered funds as General Secretary.

²⁰ In the Baptist tradition a number of local congregation form an association. The association furthers fellowship and mutual assistance, but has no governing authority.

²¹ Int. Rev Akim Chirwa 7.3.1994.

that the police would not immediately think of. Hearing this, he offered Soche Baptist Church, and so the meeting took place in the small room on the left side of the sanctuary, while in the other small room on the right side Mrs Martha Chirwa, Mrs Chiume and Wambali Mkandawire prayed for its success.²² At the end even a group photo was made on the steps leading into the church.²³

The Chirwas had received their theological training at the Baptist Seminary in Gweru, Zimbabwe, where they also studied Liberation Theology, Black Theology and African Theology. There Rev Chirwa understood that sin is not only personal and individual, but that there is also structural sin. Therefore the church had to concern itself with these sins, too, like injustice and oppression.

Rev Chirwa did not understand himself as a politician.²⁴ As a pastor he wanted to keep out of party politics, but he and his wife felt that they had to support, for theological reasons, a political pressure group fighting for an end to oppression.²⁵ In addition he wanted to help achieve religious freedom, especially the freedom of the pulpit.²⁶

When the Chirwas had to make this decision, they could not inform their church committee. But as Rev Chirwa preached every Sunday, sermons on "political" issues not being excluded, and as the Chirwas made their stand clear, the leadership of the congregation supported them. In this way, for a certain period of time, their house became a nerve centre for the exchange of "seditious" information²⁷ and for counselling those who struggled. When the possession of seditious literature or the access to seditious fax machines and photocopiers landed many in such renowned places as Chichiri Prison, not too far from Soche Baptist Church, the Chirwas helped

²² It was not so difficult to maintain secrecy. Rev and Mrs Chirwa asked no one from the church committee for permission, and to all people around it looked like a normal Saturday morning church activity. It could have been a wedding, or, if one would miss the bride at that, it could easily have been a retreat with people coming from other places even in cars.

²³ Was this another way of camouflaging?

²⁴ This in turn did not exclude his joining AFORD as a member and selling membership cards when it was still "seditious" to do so (Rendell Day, 12.3.1994).

²⁵ Int Martha and Akim Chirwa 7.3.1994.

²⁶ "Contrary to the claims of the MCP government, we had no religious freedom. We were not allowed to preach the biblical message on peace and justice" (Ibid.).

²⁷ For example a local church leader would come to the pastor, saying: "I found some information, which might be of interest to you."

with prayer, advice and practical assistance, including bringing those who suffered into touch with Red Cross and Legal Aid.

In my opinion, the Chirwas' attitude can be seen as a typical Baptist attitude. It is not the leadership on the national level which is supposed to act, but individuals, committed to their faith based on the whole biblical message, who are willing, for the sake of their faith, to take up a minority position. But though doing this alone, their congregation would endorse their step, and even share in the implementation. All this would happen initially through informal decision making processes.

The Soche Baptist case, though typically Baptist, does not represent the attitude of all Baptists. The Chirwas reported that those members of their congregation who had less education would also usually be less active in their support for Christian political action, and would be more willing to go along with the status quo.

It would need much research to find out how Baptists outside the cities reacted to the changing political climate. From the limited amount of information available, the case of the remote Sambaimfa Baptist Congregation (not far from Mayaka) seems to be typical. They were not in any way actively involved in the process of bringing about change, but they were informed at least in general, and they clearly went along with it. They were also aware that Emmanuel Chinkwita Phiri was the chairman of their denomination,²⁸ and they were aware of his political activities, too. If observations like these can be generalized to some extent, this would not make the grassroots Baptists leaders in the transition process, but neither would it make them a force for the support of dictatorship, obedience and discipline.²⁹

Within the Baptist Convention the [American Southern Baptist] missionary influence is still strong.³⁰ The majority of the missionaries,

²⁸ This knowledge of the denominational chairman is not regular, for example, among Baptists in Germany.

²⁹ Based on conversation of Rendell Day and Klaus Fiedler with the leaders of the church in February 1994.

³⁰ The work of the Baptist Convention of Malawi originates in Southern Baptist missionary activities starting in 1954, with the first resident missionaries and the first congregation in 1960 (Rendell Day, *From Gowa Industrial Mission to Landmark Missionary Baptists: One hundred Years of Baptist Churches in Malawi*. Public Seminar Paper, Department of Theology and Religious Studies, 17.3.1994, p. 14. *Now available as: Rendell Day, *From Gowa Industrial Mission to Landmark*

especially those living in the Central Region, seem to have been not too unhappy with the Ngwazi's version of religious freedom,³¹ and some definitely feared change as it would bring disorder.³² But others supported the process of change right from the beginning.³³

The Chirwas were not alone in their support for change. Akim Chirwa was able to share his attitudes with Fletcher Kaiya, the Baptist Convention's General Secretary, who also strongly supported the changes. He saw the Banda regime as usurpation, and he expressed this by telling people at MBC³⁴ that the President must not be called Namalenga (Creator), as that title was reserved for God alone.³⁵

The most visible Baptist contribution to the process of change are the activities of Rev Emmanuel Chinkwita Phiri, pastor of Lilongwe Baptist Church³⁶ and Chairman of the Baptist Convention. He worked for change as Acting General Secretary of the CCM for a short time, and as Acting Chairman of the Public Affairs Committee during the period of its peak

Missionary Baptists: One Hundred Years of Baptist Churches in Malawi, Zomba: Kachere Documents no. 52.

³¹ Vividly portrayed on a full first page in the propaganda paper "Guardian Today" of 12-18.5.1993. The article starts: "For all practical purposes, we have freedom of worship in Malawi," and it supports this claim by sporting a picture of 1978 where the Ngwazi shakes hands with Archbishop James Chiona. The caption starts: "His Excellency the Life President is a man who does not interfere with freedom of worship in this country." Then: "...during the national services of worship... he brings together Protestants, Catholics, Moslems, Sikhs and Hindus to worship together." The Jehovah's Witnesses are not mentioned, however.

³² Mrs Chirwa was able to comfort some of them, telling them that these pressure groups wanted democracy, not disorder (Int. 7.3.1994).

³³ For example Teresa and Rendell Day of Zomba. Teresa Day, together with women leaders from various Baptist congregations in the area, conducted pre-referendum voters' education using the Roman Catholic bishops' pastoral letter *Choosing Our Future* (2.2.1993). A sideline note: I was surprised to learn that even this second pastoral letter was transported from the printing press at Balaka with the same secrecy as the first letter.

³⁴ Fletcher Kaiya works in the Baptist Media Centre in Blantyre and is also a radio programmer. His position as Baptist Convention General Secretary is spare time.

³⁵ Information from Rendell Day, end of 1992.

³⁶ He received his advanced training at the Baptist Seminaries at Arusha (Tanzania) and Rüslikon (Switzerland).

activity leading up to the referendum.³⁷ There were probably two attempts to poison him and one to kill him in a car accident.³⁸ In addition he and his wife Jane were harassed at the road block at Kamuzu Barrage and threatened with death.³⁹

What Chinkwita did, he did as an individual, not under instructions from the Baptist Convention. But though there were some questions, the Convention, when it met, supported him as its Chairman.⁴⁰ However, because of the Baptist understanding of congregational church government, the support from his congregation might have been more relevant. In his congregation also there were members who were unhappy with his position. However, the congregation supported him in what he did.⁴¹

In his Christian attitude Chinkwita Phiri differed from Chirwa in one important point: Chirwa did not accept any position in any party, he wanted to remain non-partisan for the sake of his ministry. Chinkwita, to the

³⁷ "As we meet for our Annual General Meeting we are proud and thankful to God that during the course of these dramatic changes, we have not been spectators at all. We have stood our ground on what we believe ... The role that our chairman played as Chairman of PAC was quite significant" (The Baptist Convention of Malawi 1993 Annual Report, p. 1).

³⁸ Unattributable interview, see also, "The Referendum in Malawi: Free Expression Denied," Article 19: Censorship News, Issue 22, April 1993, pp. 8f.

³⁹ Personal communication ("I was ready to die") and Patrick Kalagho, "I was harassed, says Chinkwita" in *The Nation*, 25.10.1993. The MCP paper *Malawi News* afterwards tried to create the impression that Chinkwita had provoked the guard (Reader's letter by Augustine Chilumpha Banda, Lilongwe, titled [over four columns]: "Why did Chinkwita fail to answer the question?" (*Malawi News*, 13-19.11.1993).

⁴⁰ The Baptist Convention will elect a new Chairman later this year [1995]. According to the constitution, Chinkwita cannot be re-elected.

⁴¹ In discussion during the Faith and Knowledge Seminar no. 32, 17 March 1994. (Rendell Day, The Case for the Separation of State and Church) there was consensus that this put him in a different category from the other two "political Reverends" Aaron Longwe and Peter Kaleso. They had left the congregational ministry for specialized activities, and their Synod did not endorse them fully, whereas Chinkwita remained an active congregational pastor. (He stressed this point incidentally when he visited me during the lunch break when Parliament met to repeal the dress code and a few other oppressive laws. He related that he had just conducted a wedding and that some people there were astonished to see him as an ordinary pastor.)

contrary, joined UDF, and accepted a position in its leadership. This meant that he would no longer be Acting Chairman of the recently revived Public Affairs Committee, where he was replaced by Dr Silas Ncozana of Blantyre Synod. Nevertheless, he remained a pastor of his congregation and Chairman of the Baptist Convention.

I close this section with two episodes, one from the educated Baptist membership and one from the Baptist fringe. In the aftermath of the drought the Baptist Mission (together with other missions and churches) was heavily involved in food aid in the Zomba area. One day, when maize was to be distributed in Mposa in Machinga District in a drought relief project in 1991, the chief stood up and thanked the Ngwazi for bringing the maize, but a local Baptist pastor replied: "No, the Baptists are the ones bringing us the maize." The other episode took place later in the process of change, well after the referendum. I was attending a Baptist Sunday morning service, the preacher was a school teacher. She preached about repentance, and she started her sermon by showing the power of repentance and salvation: "Even His Excellency, if he would repent, could still find salvation, and even John Tembo." I have included these two episodes here as evidence for grassroots participation in the process of change.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church

The Seventh-day Adventists are a special case among the evangelical churches in Malawi. They are a well organized international Protestant church. They have a strongly evangelical piety, but a distinct theology, which stresses eschatology and the strict separation between state and church and keeps them a bit apart from other evangelical churches, so that for example they do not belong to the Christian Council.⁴²

Their theology of separation of state and church makes them reluctant to make public statements on "political" issues.⁴³ But that is no sign of support for an authoritarian political system trying to control all aspects of

⁴² For an insightful book on the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church see: R.W. Schwarz, *Light Bearers to the Remnant*, Mountain View/Oshawa: Pacific Press, 1979.

⁴³ "We teach and advise our members and believers that if they desire to vote, to do so according to the dictates of their own individual consciences enlightened by a due regard for sanctified Christian principles" (SDA Director Pastor Masoka interview in *The New Express* 11th-17th June [the referendum issue]).

life.⁴⁴ To the contrary, this attitude is a clear rebuff of a government usurping religious qualities.⁴⁵ That the Ngwazi once turned to the SDA to attend prayers at Malamulo was not a sign of SDA support (why should they refuse someone who wants to pray...) but of his desperation to claim some religious support beyond that from Nkhoma Synod.⁴⁶ The SDA Church in this connection made it clear that there was nothing wrong in accepting a donation to help with the renovation of the church and that neither this nor any other present would buy them.

At this time accusations were rife that the SDA Church was supporting the MCP. Was the newly acquired MCP leader Gwanda Chakwamba not a Seventh-day Adventist? Did he not claim to have read through the whole Bible many times while in prison?⁴⁷ In addition, one of the newly appointed ministers, Ziyenda, was also a Seventh-day Adventist. The MCP press made him a Reverend, and so did MCP leaders in Parliament.⁴⁸ But again in the free press it was quickly pointed out that Ziyenda had been a SDA pastor, but was no longer.⁴⁹ After this in the MCP press also his title was changed

⁴⁴ "Our refusal to take part in party politics is not a lack of sympathy with the attainment of proper government, but it is due to following the counsel of Christ that His Kingdom is not of this world." (ibid.)

⁴⁵ The situation is becoming more complicated now, because the newly appointed MCP Secretary General testifies to a clear conversion through a SDA preacher while serving 13 of 22 years imprisonment: "Since I was baptized in prison on January 26, 1992 all the hatred for my enemies [MCP] was buried in the water of baptism" (*The New Voice* 11-17.10.1993 quoting Gwanda Chakuamba in the article: Kalera Mhango: "Did Tembo bribe Gwanda with K 10m?")

⁴⁶ He made a similar attempt to claim Catholic support with this year's martyrs' prayers, which he attended at St. Montfort Church in Blantyre. By his absence Archbishop Chiona made it clear that Dr Banda had come to pray and not for politics, so he was received by the local parish priest, Monsignor Lawrence Simbota. The *Daily Times* (by some post-classical church leaders fondly called "Daily Lies," by others "Daily Noise") saw things differently, claiming that "he led the nation in prayer" (7.3.1994). The parish council announced through MBC that all regular Sunday activities would proceed as usual.

⁴⁷ Maundu Mwale of Lilongwe challenged his conversion in the *Nation* of 22 October 1993 with a letter titled "Born again indeed."

⁴⁸ "Our Reverend" (Hansard).

⁴⁹ Seventh-day Adventists do not use the title "Reverend," but call their ministers "Pastor."

from Hon. Rev. Ziyenda to the simple Hon. Ziyenda.⁵⁰ It was also easy to observe that Chakwamba, who made some references to his SDA conversion very early after his "defection" from UDF, soon stopped to allude to things like that.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church even went out of her way to publish a weighty document on her position in the process of change. The church made it clear that its apolitical stance does not mean support for oppression, and that it would in no way exclude the search for a better society. "We did not write the Pastoral letter, but we fully support it."⁵¹

The document pointed out that there had been SDA resistance, especially from the side of women who refused to dance for the President, particularly on a Sabbath. This was also made clear in a reader's letter.

I have heard from many people that the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Malawi is for the Malawi Congress Party. This belief seems to be strengthened by the District Party Chairman for Blantyre, Charles Kamphulusa.

A point of order please: MCP leaders know the stand of our church. As a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, I would like to educate the nation that there is no moment that the ruling party has loved this church.

Women members of the Seventh-day Adventist are the most hated under the current system because they refuse to go for dances on Saturday. We still call upon the MCP to respect the Sabbath and stop forcing women to attend to political matters on this day instead of worshipping God.

SDA Woman, Chileka⁵²

The Seventh-day Adventist Church presents a political attitude that does not fit into the categories of "prophetic voice" or "witness" as often applied to the classical churches. Its premises (esp. on church-state relationship) are fundamentally different. They may make them less vocal supporters of the process of change, but it also prevents them becoming enthusiastic supporters of a new political regime, as happened to the CCAP at independence. Therefore their voice should be heard in theological thinking.

⁵⁰ Ziyenda failed to be nominated in his constituency as a candidate for the general elections (*Daily Times*, 22.3.1994).

⁵¹ See: Felix Mponda, "SDA Church Spells out its Apolitical Stance," *The New Express*, 11-17.6.1993.

⁵² *The Nation*, 11.-17.6.1994.

Other Post-classical Churches

My information is insufficient to cover all the post-classical churches. Therefore I just want to mention a few things here. The Pentecostal churches, which elsewhere, for example in Latin America, are "the option of the poor,"⁵³ do not seem to be prominent in that role here. But it should be recorded that two leaders in the process of transition are Pentecostals: Harry Chiume (Church of Jesus Christ)⁵⁴ and Rev Dr Dumbo Lemani, who started his political career as Banda's first detainee and now is a member of the United Full Gospel Church.⁵⁵

Owning and Disowning a (Post-classical) Hero

I close this chapter with a look back into history. The post-classical missions can be proud of two men who, not without cost, resisted the oppressive political system of their time, Joseph Booth and John Chilembwe.⁵⁶ Booth, among other things, wrote (in 1897!) a book called *Africa for the African*,⁵⁷ and Chilembwe led the 1915 Rising. Since *Africa for the African* is difficult to get, in Malawi as in the USA, it is understandable (and excusable) that the Ngwazi, despite his love for everything "chizungu," never claimed the Booth heritage for himself. But his attitude to Chilembwe and his heritage is more astonishing, and a number of questions remain unanswered, because the overall impression is that Banda both used the Chilembwe heritage and played it down at the same time. This is shown in the fact that he visited Providence Industrial Mission for the first and only time in the declining years of his political career. Dr Malekebu, the successor of John Chilembwe, the Ngwazi honoured with his enmity. Rendell Day sheds some light on this issue:

Dr. Malekebu had his disagreements with the President of Malawi, Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda and one such incident led to the closing of the primary school at PIM. Rev. Chipuliko the then Chairman of the

⁵³ This term has been coined to challenge some churches' concept of their "preferential option for the poor."

⁵⁴ According to other typologies it can be seen also as an African Independent Church.

⁵⁵ *The Enquirer*, 19-25.10.1993. In this and following issues Lemani tells his story.

⁵⁶ Chilembwe is the founder of the African Baptist Assembly, commonly known as Providence Industrial Mission.

⁵⁷ Baltimore, 1897. *Reprinted as Joseph Booth, *Africa for the African*, edited by Laura Perry, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1998.

PIM gives two reasons for the closing of the school. First, Dr. Malekebu disagreed with the forced buying of "party" cards and second, Dr. Banda may have felt threatened by the strong leadership qualities that Dr. Malekebu had. Dr. Banda at one time called Dr. Malekebu a "Capricorn" for he regarded him as a threat to his power. During Liberian President Tolbert's visit to Malawi, he insisted that Banda and Malekebu be reconciled. This seems to have helped to take off some of the pressure from Malekebu.⁵⁸

With this historical background, it was understandable that UDF tried to claim the neglected heritage for itself, by rehabilitating the grave of some of the fallen heroes. With the church not being bound to one party, it was also logical that Rev. Chipuliko then invited all leaders (UDF, AFORD, MCP) to a memorial celebration at Providence Industrial Mission.⁵⁹ The Ngwazi did not come, but the MCP was represented, and its representative felt obliged to outdo the opposition in donating not K 10,000 to the Chilembwe scholarship fund, but by promising K 50,000.⁶⁰ Feeling that this was not enough, he disclosed that the Ngwazi had generous plans for the development of the area, but he did not mention why the Ngwazi had needed 30 years to develop those very plans.⁶¹

Conclusion

Though the contribution of the post-classical churches differed in many ways from that of the classical denominations, it was and is far from being negligible. It deserves attention as such, but also because of its different undergirding theological premises.

⁵⁸ Rendell Day, *From Gowa Industrial Mission to Landmark Missionary Baptists: One Hundred Years of Baptist Churches in Malawi*, Zomba: Kachere Documents no. 52, p. 10 (Int. with Rev Chipuliko). Tolbert always was an active Baptist and for some time also a Vice-President of the Baptist World Alliance.

⁵⁹ *The Monitor*, 7.2.1994; *The Mirror*, 3.12.1993 (*The Mirror* shows the correct monument at Nsoni, the one in *The Monitor* was not erected by UDF.)

⁶⁰ Even a week after the election, despite repeated promises to the contrary, the money had not been paid. UDF and AFORD have paid what they promised.

⁶¹ A PIM member commented: "They haven't done anything for us for 30 years, should we be impressed with 50,000 Kwacha?"

6 Even in the Church the Exercise of Power is Accountable to God¹ (1996)

State Power - Church Power - Counter Power

The church, its message, its personnel, its institutions constitute a power in the land, a political power indeed, and, depending on the historical constellation, its exercise of power may have far-reaching effects. An example is the fact that the founding of modern Malawi in its present shape was largely due to mission interference in (colonial) politics.² But the church is a power not only in relation to the political powers that be, but also a power in relation to the people of the country, be they members, potential members or adherents of a competing faith or denomination. The church can fascinate them, deny them (easy) access, offer opportunities of development (or refuse them for theological or non-theological reasons), discipline them, in general, define much of their lives. This power, though, is not unlimited, because the individuals have power, too: the power to invest love, to withdraw support, to change patterns of involvement. The state and its institutions can—and frequently do—misuse their power. For use and misuse of power the state and its institutions are responsible to God, for their own benefit. And for their own benefit, the churches, too, are responsible to God for their use or misuse of the considerable power they have.

The church and its members

The two Scottish Presbyterian Missions became formidable powers early in their history in Malawi, since many Malawians wanted to become Christians, more than the missionaries felt they needed. So around the turn of the century the missionaries, "preferring quality against quantity," made

¹ First published as: Klaus Fiedler, "Even in the Church the Exercise of Power is Accountable to God," in: Kenneth R. Ross (ed): *God, People and Power in Malawi: Democratization in Theological Perspective*. Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1996, pp. 187-224. Reprinted 1997.

² See: Andrew C. Ross, *Blantyre Mission and the Making of Modern Malawi*, Blantyre: CLAIM 1996 (Kachere Monograph no. 1), esp. pp. 85-104. Also: B. Pachai, *Malawi: The History of the Nation*, London: Longman, 1973, pp. 70-80.

baptism and church membership an achievement not so easy to obtain.³ Things have changed since then, with Christian pluralism gaining ground being one of the reasons. Today the power of any church to discipline its members is limited by the power of the people to choose and to change. Therefore, if all exercise of power is accountable to God, in this case the power of the church is also accountable to the people, or, if not accountable, it is at least being checked by the power of the people. On the one hand the power of the church over its members is structured through the sacraments: baptism, communion, confirmation, marriage, ordination. These are, in Malawi, highly coveted initiation rites and status symbols of achievement which a church can grant, withhold or put price-tags on. On the other hand, church members can resist the demands, opt out of the system or twist it.

A plurality of churches

The churches are in a power relationship not only towards the state and towards their members, but also among each other. Missionary work in Malawi was started by churches who were convinced that they were able to cater for the religious needs of all the people, if not of the whole land, but of the area allotted to them in "comity" with other missions of like faith.⁴ Today Christian pluralism is a well established fact, wholeheartedly disliked by some church leaders, but obviously fulfilling the wishes of many people. One reason for this appreciation of Christian pluralism is that it empowers those that are religiously powerless or of limited power. Christian pluralism allows them to make choices, reject interference and develop their own individual possibilities.⁵ This strong Christian pluralism distinguishes Malawi from surrounding Mozambique, with which it shares much in terms of culture. If one takes statistics to be a proper way of measuring Christian strength, Malawi is far more a Christian country than the surrounding areas of Mozambique.⁶

³ John McCracken, *Politics and Christianity in Malawi 1875-1940*, Cambridge University Press 1977, pp. 202ff.

⁴ On the comity principle and its critique see Klaus Fiedler, *The Story of Faith Missions*, Oxford: Regnum, 1994, pp. 188-193.

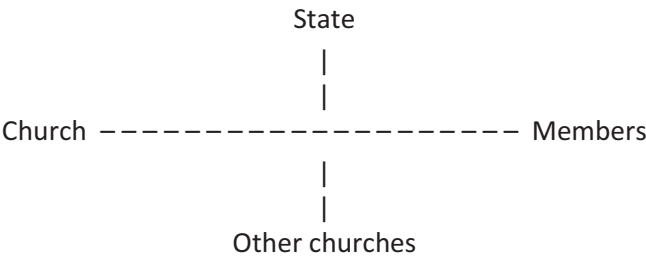
⁵ See J.C. Chakanza, "Good Shoppers of Religious Goods: Religion in a Multi-faith Malawian Society," in J.C. Chakanza & K.R. Ross, *Religious Pluralism in Contemporary Malawi*, Sources for the Study of Religion in Malawi no. 15, 1992.

⁶ About 1975, Mozambique was 34.9% Christian, Malawi 62%, according to D. Barrett, *World Christian Encyclopedia, A Comparative Survey of Churches and*

The issue of power relationships has often been studied in respect to African Instituted Churches which were seen often as "break-away churches." This view of seeing breaking away from the mission churches to be the main characteristic of the AICs is quite debatable,⁷ but they do offer alternatives and therefore limit the power of the mission churches. In my research I touch only lightly on this, but the African Instituted Churches are not the only alternative. A considerable alternative, ever growing in strength and variety, is new "mission churches," which I call tentatively the "post-classical churches." They are "mission churches" just as much or as little as the mainline churches are. They do not usually profess a special openness for "African" culture as some of the African Instituted Churches do, but they offer a serious alternative to the "big" churches, empowering the people to make choices in spirituality, affiliation, acceptance of church discipline, personal involvement and authority. To these churches, often overlooked or considered to be a nuisance, and to their relationships with the "established" (classical) churches and among each other, I give special prominence in this chapter.

Religion as power relations

It is possible, and I think necessary, to see the Christian faith as a web of power relations:



In this web of power relationships there are, to borrow political terms, "one-party" and "multi-party" tendencies, which may be distributed in different patterns. Thus a church may strongly oppose an authoritarian government, but strictly enforce (or at least attempt to enforce) unity, obedience and uniformity among its members. Many church members

Religions in the Modern World AD 1900-2000, Nairobi/Oxford/New York, 1982. This seems to be reflected, too, by many Malawian missionary efforts across the border in Mozambique.

⁷ J.C. Chakanza, "Sectarianism in Joseph Booth's Mission Foundations 1925 - 1975," *Religion in Malawi*, no. 2, 1988, pp. 6-10 [9].

seem to have a preference for "multi-party" tendencies, but it may also be that a staunch church elder develops these tendencies only after his own son had made a woman pregnant before marrying her.

Christianity and other religions

Power is not only an issue between the church and the state and within Christianity, but also in relation to other religions. I have not included this issue into my research. But I want to mention three aspects.

(1) African Traditional Religion is still a power to reckon with, because aspects of its spirituality are a reality to many Christians or a possible alternative to Christians in times of personal crisis.⁸ However, as organized religion it has lost most of its power.⁹

(2) The power relationship between Christianity and Islam is quite stable. Conversions occur both ways, but not in big numbers.¹⁰ There has indeed been an Islamic revival, which shows its power in the strengthening of various Islamic institutions,¹¹ but not in any major changes in religious allegiance.

(3) During the referendum and general elections campaign of 1994, both the Malawi Congress Party (MCP) as a political and the Charismatics as a religious group tried to capitalize on the threat of impending Islamization, since the leading presidential contender, Bakili Muluzi, was a Muslim. The MCP seems not to have gained votes measurably by these tactics, as Muluzi was heavily supported even in strongly Christian areas.

The Research Methods Employed

In my research I have used different approaches to gather data, in all of which research assistants played a major role.

1. For the historical side all files available in the National Archives have been perused.

⁸ The new "Mchape" movement of Chisupe is a case in point. See J.C. Chakanza, Mchape. Faith and Knowledge Seminar Chancellor College No. 39, 1995.

⁹ Isabel A. Phiri, "African Traditional Women and Ecofeminism," Faith and Knowledge Seminar, Chancellor College, No. 36, 1995.

¹⁰ William Mumba, "Christianity and the Yao: Empirical Problems of Christian Witness," Dipl. Zomba Theological College, 1995.

¹¹ Alfred Matiki, "Problems of Islamic Education in Malawi," *Religion in Malawi*, 1994, pp. 18-22.

2. In addition published books and articles as well as unpublished papers on the history of the "smaller" missions and churches were used, including some material being produced in the postgraduate programme of the Department of Theology and Religious Studies.
3. To gather data on power relations in the church research assistants have done extensive field work in a number of denominations and areas. Obviously they had to be selective, and specific emphasis was placed on various Baptist denominations and in geographical terms on areas with a high incidence of denominational pluralism.
4. In order to weigh the evidence properly, special research was conducted into the history and present situation of Baptist women.

Theology talked versus theology acted

I understand my research as research into theology, but not into learned theology as published in books produced by distinguished authors, but into theology of the people. In my research I distinguish between "theology talked" and "theology acted." The two sometimes coincide, sometimes they conflict. In many churches in Malawi in issues related to power, theology *talked* by the church (as represented by its leaders) is very different from theology *acted* (as represented by the same leaders). In turn the theology acted of the leaders may differ from the theology acted of the ordinary Christians. In this chapter theology normally means theology acted.

Just as there is not only one theology talked, there is also not just one theology acted. Different denominations, social groups or communities act their theology in different ways. In this chapter I will use at certain points the differentiation between the mainline churches (for Malawi these comprise the CCAP, the Anglicans and the Catholics) and the (smaller) evangelical churches. Protestant will be distinguished from evangelical, with evangelical being a sub group of Protestant, comprising very different churches which all go back to revivals from the 1820s onwards.¹²

For my analysis I use insights from my previous research, from interaction with my colleagues in the Department at the University of Malawi (since October 1992) and from interaction with and research done

¹² For a full discussion of the historical typology employed here see: Klaus Fiedler, *The Story of Faith Missions*, Oxford: Regnum, 1994, pp. 13-31; for a brief overview, adapted to Malawi, see: Klaus Fiedler: "The 'Smaller' Churches and Big Government," in: M.S. Nzunda; K.R. Ross, *Church, Law and Political Transition in Malawi 1992-1994*, Gweru: Mambo-Kachere, 1995, pp. 153-170.

by our students, especially those in the postgraduate programme. I am a Baptist, and especially in the section on the relationship between the smaller and the bigger churches, I find myself often, again using political terminology, on the side of the opposition. My position also shows in the fact that I do not assign to ordination the importance it has in mainline churches as reflected in the Lima Document.¹³

Sacraments are to organize power

Power in church can obviously be exercised by church structures and by personalities. But though maybe less obvious, nevertheless it is clear that sacraments are closely related to power, and indeed, much of the power in a church is organized around the sacraments. How is it exercised? Is there accountability? Is the exercise of power through the sacraments in theology acted the same as in theology talked? How do "ordinary" people perceive the exercise of power in the church through the sacraments?

These issues will be treated first in the context of the main stream churches, with which most people are more familiar, then in the context of the evangelical churches. This differentiation seems to be necessary to me since there are major differences in sacramental theology between the various churches.

The various churches differ greatly in their doctrines of the sacraments, but they have one thing in common: Whatever their doctrine is, it is clearly defined. But my observation is that the church members are not so clearly in agreement with the stated sacramental doctrines of their churches, and often it seems to me that even these very churches, which have such clear theologies of the sacraments in theology talked, do not always appreciate these same doctrines in theology acted.

Sacraments in Theology Talked

In theology talked the following points in the doctrine of the sacraments seem to me important:

1. The sacraments are "outward signs of inward grace."

¹³ This high emphasis on ordination is reflected clearly in the so called Lima Document, where the ordained ministry is seen as the possibly most powerful tool for Christian unity (*Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, Faith and Order Paper No. 111, Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1982, ⁴⁰2010 [The Lima Document]).

2. The denominations differ as to the number of sacraments, but each denomination itself is clear how many there are: Seven for Catholics,¹⁴ two for Protestants.
3. The mainline churches all agree that the sacraments are necessary for a healthy Christian life and growth.
4. Several sacraments as means of grace are given at the beginning of a "journey": Baptism, marriage, ordination.
5. All denominations agree that a full Christian life is also a sacramental life. Emphases differ, and expressions vary, but each denomination expects a "full member in good standing" to participate in the sacraments whenever they are offered.

Sacraments in Theology Acted: the churches' side

In the Protestant churches there are only two sacraments, baptism and communion. Their administration is restricted to holders of power, namely the ordained, a very limited group in terms of numbers. Two "non-sacraments" are equally restricted, namely (clerical) ordination¹⁵ and marriage. Concerning marriage, though for Protestants never defined as a sacrament, the Protestant churches act as if it were one: the rite is most solemn, its administration is restricted to the ordained, and in order to receive the "sacrament," the recipients have to qualify, which is not always easy. Though never defined by Protestants as a sacrament either, ordination seems to be the most important "sacrament" to organize the church and to restrict the exercise of power and the access to privileges in it. In all mainline churches (and in many evangelical churches as well) the administration of the sacraments is tied to ordination, and ordination is restricted to few people. Lay Christians are permitted and indeed encouraged to preach, even though they might not have learnt much theology, and even though their theology may be weak or positively flawed. But to administer the sacraments a long training in theology (including Greek, Historical Criticism, African Theology, Islam, Church History) is required. But does it really take that long to learn the required liturgies and to understand the circumstances and conditions for the celebration of

¹⁴ In Malawi the Anglicans must be counted as Catholics in some aspects and as Protestants in others. Sacramentally they are Catholic.

¹⁵ In this chapter ordination means ordination for the clerical ministry. Some churches ordain (in larger numbers) lay elders. They are excluded in this discussion since their ordination does not confer the right to administer the sacraments.

communion or the administration of baptism? To me there seems to be a hidden agenda, namely to keep power in the hands of the few. This seems to me obvious also in those churches which have a *clerus major* and a *clerus minor*. The lower *clerus* is then called "evangelists" or "catechists." Some of them receive a training of several years. Should that not be sufficient to celebrate communion as the common meal of the faithful in anticipation of the coming of the risen Lord? But to restrict ordination to the few establishes hierarchies and restricts power.

The restrictive attitude to ordination seems to explain the reluctance of many Protestant pastors to allow the ordination of women. In the Roman Catholic Church there are, to some extent, theological reasons against the ordination of women to the priesthood, but in Protestant churches such arguments like: "It is not yet the opportune time" or "Women are too emotional" or "How can they minister in church when they menstruate" or "How can they cook for their husbands when they have to preach on Sundays" etc are quite common.¹⁶ Is not the real question: "Why should we share power with those who are inferior to us [males]?" This restriction of power to the few is clearly visible in the Roman Catholic Church with very few priests, too few according to her own standards. Nice as the constant clamour for more priests sounds, everything is done to keep the numbers of people who join the sacramental ministry low: Marriage is not permitted, though this is not really necessary since in the Eastern Rite Roman Catholic Churches most priests are married. Women also are not permitted to enter the priesthood. Here the fact that Jesus called only men to be apostles is given as a theological reason.¹⁷ Both, historical and theological reasons, achieve the same: Restriction of sacramental (and administrative) power to a few, an *élite*.

In almost all churches there is a clear and very important distinction between lay and clergy. Ordination does not only assign power over the sacraments, but also administrative power, since most top positions in the church are reserved for the ordained. This shows even in the Presbyterian churches, where the leadership consists of elders (both teaching and ruling elders) and deacons, and where the ordained pastor is just a teaching elder. But in reality he is the ruler of the congregation, since the major events in the congregation cannot take place without him. There are a few churches

¹⁶ Cf. Barnabas Salaka, *The Ordination of Women Debate in the Diocese of Southern Malawi*, BA, University of Malawi, 1996.

¹⁷ But he did not call Gentiles either. Should therefore the sacramental priesthood be restricted to Jews?

in Malawi where this strict differentiation between laity and clergy should not apply. A case in point is the Baptist Convention. Baptist theology does not require ordination for the administration of the sacraments,¹⁸ though this is generally assumed in theology acted of the Southern Baptists, the mother church of the Baptist Convention. This assumption was not introduced in Malawi, and communion and baptism are regularly administered by unordained men. The reason, in theology acted, seems not to have been the wish to make communion available to church members everywhere easily, but seeing communion not as such an important part of the Christian life.¹⁹ In the African Baptist Assembly (Providence Industrial Mission), the oldest Baptist denomination in Malawi, the situation is very clear: Baptism and communion can only be administered by ordained ministers.²⁰ This fits in with the generally centralized structure of the denomination.²¹

Sacraments in Theology Acted: the peoples' side

How many sacraments?

For many Protestant Christians there are more sacraments than two. The third is usually marriage. And indeed, is not marriage far more solemn than any other sacrament? Is it not far more difficult to achieve? Could one imagine a wedding conducted by a laymen? Or by a lay woman? In popular perception Protestant marriage is a sacrament, equally indissoluble as Catholic sacramental marriage. It is the highest of the sacraments. I have observed this, too, in various parts of East Africa and Congo,²² and even Protestant (and largely secular) Germany makes no exception.

¹⁸ Baptists prefer to use the term "ordinances" instead of sacraments.

¹⁹ This is definitely not what theology talked says, but in the village congregations communion is celebrated infrequently. *In the Baptist Convention of Malawi, in theology *acted*, ordinary people are not allowed to administer Communion, only pastors, be they ordained or not.

²⁰ Information from Patrick Makondesa, based on research in the Phalombe area, 1995.

²¹ Compared to other Baptist denominations, PIM is far more centralized, which is partly due to its American mother church, the National Baptist Convention, Inc. *For the history see: Patrick Makondesa, *The Church History of Providence Industrial Mission*, Zomba: CLAIM-Kachere, 2006.

²² See Klaus Fiedler, "For the Sake of Christian Marriage Abolish Church Weddings," *Religion in Malawi*, 1995, pp. 22-27.

Burial is no sacrament, wedding is

Is funeral, a major transition rite, also a sacrament? There seems to be a difference in perception between Europe and Africa. In Germany, for example, people can hardly imagine a funeral conducted by a lay person, and even people who never went to church for 20 years are eager to have a minister officiate at their burial. This attitude I have not found in Africa. The funeral is a transition rite just as much as a wedding, but for a funeral no clergy is really needed. Catechists and elders are good enough for that. Why? Because of the urgency the funeral does not lend itself easily to the support of power structures. Communion, baptisms and weddings can wait till the priest becomes available, and power can be organized around them.

Sacraments are for achievers: baptism

In theology talked sacraments stand at the beginning of the journey or accompany the journey from day to day as divine means of grace. This is not necessarily so in popular perception. The sacrament of baptism is nowadays easy to obtain: No baby asks for it and many babies receive it. In the earlier days of Malawian church history this was different. To achieve baptism was hard work. Up to four years of instruction were necessary to be admitted to baptism. The ordained pastors (in those days almost all were missionaries) wielded an immense power related to the sacrament, given the high demand for the sacrament in certain areas of Malawi like Tongaland.²³ Some of this is still true, though denominational pluralism has brought competition and the sacrament of baptism therefore does not lend itself so easily any more to be a means for the stratification of power. If conditions in one church are too harsh, people can opt out and achieve the desired result more easily in another church.

In some churches even infant baptism is not so easy to obtain, because the parents must be church members in good standing, which normally is interpreted to mean that they must be properly married (even though their Christian commitment may not go beyond that). But if baptism is the sacrament of prevenient grace, why should the baby suffer for the parents

²³ John McCracken, *Politics and Christianity in Malawi 1875-1940. The Impact of the Livingstonia Mission in the Northern Province, Zomba: Kachere*, ²2008, pp. 184ff. This situation explains to some extent the phenomenal success of Elliot Kamwana in 1909 who baptized more than 9,000 people in about three months. It also explains why Livingstonia missionaries arranged for his deportation by the political authorities. He had infringed on their sacramental power.

not being Christian achievers? In churches which teach believers' baptism, baptism is also increasingly easy to attain: It is still administered only on profession of faith, but nowadays even children of as low as six years of age are encouraged to make that confession.²⁴ In Baptist practice the sacrament of Baptism is easy to obtain, and to some extent it seems to have become just a transition rite. Whereas infant baptism is a transition rite accompanying the process of birth, baptism for Baptists has often become an initiation rite into adulthood. This may seem too early for children between six and ten, but the same process of the lowering of the initiation age has happened in traditional initiation and even in Muslim initiation for example among the Yao (jando).²⁵

The sacrament of communion is more difficult to achieve (and to retain)

For participation in communion a further effort is necessary, called instruction for confirmation. This is quite an effort, but generally accepted as not so difficult since it has become part of the transition rite of initiation into adulthood (and that must not be too easy!). But then it is a great achievement, at least in some churches, to retain the right to participation in communion. The most dramatic case is in the Catholic Church in patrilineal areas of Malawi, where sizable bride price is being paid, and where, as popular theology acted demands, a church wedding can only take place after the payment of the full bride price. Here the situation among some Baptist type churches is easier: The Baptist Convention does not demand a church wedding as a prerequisite for communion, nor does the African Baptist Assembly (PIM),²⁶ nor do the Seventh-day Adventists or the Seventh Day Baptists. However, in many congregations of the Baptist Convention communion has become rare. Though Baptist theology does not demand the presence of a minister to celebrate communion, popular theology tends that way. This means that many village churches go for

²⁴ I am not sure if this applies in all Malawian churches with believers' baptism. But I saw it myself both in the Baptist Convention and among the Achewa PIM Baptists. In PIM the lowest age is seven or eight (Patrick Makondesa 20 June 1996). I made the same observation in the Baptist type faith mission churches in Kenya and North Eastern Congo.

²⁵ See A.W.C. Msiska, "The Spread of Islam in Malawi and its Impact on Yao Rites of Passage, 1870-1960," *Society of Malawi Journal*, 1995, pp. 49-86 [73].

²⁶ Int Patrick Makondesa.

months on end without communion. I have not found strong regret about this or attempts to change it. Obviously communion is not so important.

The church's option for the rich

Popular custom also demands that the full bride price should not be paid before the marriage. Therefore the couple must begin their marriage without a church wedding, which would have been an outward sign of inward grace for the journey of their married life. In many churches the young couple then will be automatically barred from the sacraments which, like communion and reconciliation, were designed to help them on their Christian journey. Finally, after some or many years, when the family finally has managed to pay the last installment of the bride price, seven, ten or twenty years of married life are crowned by the administration of the highest of the sacraments, the church wedding. Isn't that an achievement? Few make it, but if you make it, you are an achiever.

Popular theology acted makes this achievement even a bigger achievement because the administration of the sacrament is indissolubly tied to a big and expensive feast. Not that the church would make the feast a precondition of the sacrament, but it concurs with popular theology by providing the sacrament at the appropriate time and by identifying with the achievers in spite of its supposed option for the poor and oppressed. The church wedding is becoming more and more a civil event (though conducted partly in church) than a sacrament. It could also be termed a "secular sacrament" of civil religion: The religion of the achievers, of those who have accumulated (or borrowed) enough wealth to be able to afford it.²⁷ I think that it is highly regrettable that the church actively condones this usurpation of spiritual power by civil religion. In doing this the church identifies with the rich and oppresses the poor, at least in those churches where participation in the sacraments is tied to a church wedding.

One should think that in matrilineal areas of Malawi, with almost no bride price being paid,²⁸ the incidence of proper church weddings is higher, and that seems to be the case in the Catholic Church. But in spite of the higher number, the tendency is similar. The number of church weddings is

²⁷ I heard of a church wedding of an Anglican priest with more than a thousand guests and costs above 30,000 Kwacha (when the Kwacha was still much more valuable than today).

²⁸ I observed recently a marriage (Chewa/Lomwe) where the bride price was 50 Kwacha, just over US\$ 3, at the time of research.

declining even in solidly matrilineal areas.²⁹ The problem seems to be the big feast. This is also borne out by interviews in the African Baptist Assembly churches. There a church wedding is not really required, but the denomination encourages its members to have their marriages registered. This arrangement accepts that Lomwe marriage is a Christian marriage if entered into by Christians. Registration is not the real marriage, but something that should be attended to after the wedding. The register of all registered marriages is kept at Providence Industrial Mission Mbombwe, not in the local churches (branches) or sections.

This seems to be in some ways a viable alternative to solve the problem of church weddings. But there are three weaknesses at least: First that there is little provision to make the traditional marriage (*chinkhoswe*) look like a Christian marriage. It often seems to be just a secular ceremony. The second problem is that there is a tendency in popular theology acted to follow the bigger churches and not accept the *chinkhoswe* as the real thing, but only as second best. The third problem is that in popular theology acted, again copying other churches, even for the registration ceremony a feast is needed. There is clear evidence in the PIM records that for several years the number of registered marriages has been going down in spite of growing membership. The African Baptist Assembly leadership teaches (as the Presbyterians do), that no feast big or small is needed for a registration/wedding in church, and they are equally unsuccessful. Since this medicine obviously does not work, I propose to stop exhorting for more church weddings, and instead to concentrate on making the *chinkhoswe* wedding the real Christian wedding. In a Baptist setting no clergyman is required for that, and local Baptists can easily do this. They are quite competent in singing, prayers, Christian advice and practical ceremonies. As an important aspect of Lomwe marriage is the appointment of and the advice and help received from the *ankhoswe*, the local church should concentrate on really Christianizing this aspect, which is so central and so much appreciated. Here Baptist women could play an important role, and the already existing office of deaconesses could help make this viable.³⁰

Ordination is powerful

In popular theology the *abusa* (pastors) are seen as men of God, much honour and power is accorded to them, and the clerical collar is valued

²⁹ Information from Dr J.C. Chakanza.

³⁰ Such an office also exists among the Seventh Day Baptists.

highly. At the same time pastors are seen as potentially wicked. In nearly all short stories published in Malawi newspapers in which a minister features, his most important characteristics are sexual sins and hypocrisy.³¹ But in spite of the fact that ministers are sometimes despised, popular theology neither questions their power nor their necessity, and often, when a minister is involved in sexual unfaithfulness, the blame is not put on him but on the woman, because "she seduced him" (and an otherwise powerful minister must not have the power to resist seduction). In spite of many popular remarks about and accusations against celibate clergy for sexual sins, popular theology in the Catholic Church seems not to be in favour of married clergy.

The highest stage of achievement in ordination is to be a bishop. The bishops are seen as very powerful. Didn't they write the Lenten pastoral letter which after all was stronger than Kamuzu? In non-episcopal churches there are some tendencies to introduce the office of bishop. This has been very clear in Tanzania, where not only all the Lutheran churches opted for the episcopal office, but even churches from traditions opposed to that on principle: The Africa Inland Church opted for bishops, and the Assemblies of God now even have an archbishop. This development has not taken place in Malawi, although the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Malawi has recently opted for episcopacy. The same has happened in many of the so called African Instituted Churches, the Achewa PIM Baptists for example are led by Bishop Ndege.³² In other churches there is no episcopal office, but episcopal-style leadership. The Providence Industrial Mission,³³ in spite of

³¹ Some of such stories are: Murendhle Juwayeni, "Sally and the Reverend," *Malawi News*, 4-10 November 1995; Feston Makaika, "Moral Decay," *Malawi News*, 27 January - 2 February 1996; *Evince Moyo*, "Nyacharu," *Malawi News*, 9-15 March 1996; Kenneth Phiri, "The Decision," *Malawi News*, 8-14 June 1996.

³² The Achewa PIM Baptists are a Baptist denomination that separated from the PIM, then led by Dr Malekebu, in 1937 under the leadership of Peter Kamkalamba with Henry Kafulatira with than 300 members in Traditional Authority Chadzakwenda area, Nathenje, Lilongwe (J.C. Chakanza, *An Annotated List of Independent Churches in Malawi*, Sources for the Study of Religion in Malawi No. 3, Zomba: University of Malawi, 1980). It has now [2004] 28 congregations, mainly south of Lilongwe. *For a full history see: Hany Longwe, *Identity by Dissociation. A History of the Achewa Providence Industrial Mission*, Mzuzu: Mzuni Press, 2013.

³³ This is the oldest Baptist denomination in Malawi. It was started in 1900 by John Chilembwe who had been trained in theology and ordained in the USA. He started PIM as a missionary of the National Baptist Convention, Inc. The official name is now African Baptist Assembly. Chilembwe's successor was Dr. Malekebu. *For the

its congregationalist background, has a strong central leadership. Only the chairman can ordain ministers, the denomination is divided into sections and branches. This episcopal practice dates back to John Chilembwe, who was the only one in the whole denomination who could administer baptism.³⁴ For many years this was the same with Dr Malekebu, who ordained the first ministers in 1945, 19 years after he had come to Malawi.³⁵

The power of non-compliance

The sacraments offer to the churches, to various degrees, means to organize power. However, church members are not powerless. The most powerful means to counteract the church's power is non-compliance. If the church excludes me from the sacraments for not conforming to its marriage laws, so be it. Maybe I can comply later. If the church requires me not to put my sons through the traditional initiation rites, that's a pity, and I won't tell the priest. But in case he should inquire, I am sorry, having my first son put through the rites I cannot promise never to do that again because I still have two more sons. However, after that the church can make peace with me again.

These attitudes are not infrequent, and I think that they are not taken seriously enough by the churches. Sacraments are means of transmitting divine grace, and that is a great privilege that the church has received to administer. Therefore I think it is not right to tie these precious divine gifts to secondary issues like how a wedding is conducted or if an ordained minister can be found or not. The same would apply to ordination. If ordination is to be set aside for ministry, why are so few people set aside in many churches? And why are those who effectively minister (like catechists or evangelists) denied the divine blessing of ordination?

history up to 1940 see: Patrick Makondesa, *The Church History of Providence Industrial Mission*, Zomba: CLAIM-Kachere, 2006.

³⁴ Patrick Makondesa, *The Life and Ministry of Rev and Mrs Muocha of Providence Industrial Mission*, BEd, University of Malawi 1996. *Published as: Patrick Makondesa, *Moyo ndi Utumiki wa Mbusa ndi Mayi Muocha*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2000.

³⁵ Ibid.

The power of choice

Another counter-power against the sacramental power of the churches is the power to change denominational allegiance. Early Livingstonia Mission had full control over admission to the sacraments. Since Elliot Kamwana that has never been the same.³⁶ Presently in a place like Migowi, not far from Phalombe, a person has, within one hour walking distance, a choice between more than 20 different denominations.³⁷

Sacramental power is decreasing

Power is an important issue in the churches, especially in the mainline churches, where the sacraments are often used to organize this power. In this organization of power there is a restrictive tendency, to limit the number of people who have access to this power. In this the churches are still very effective, and accountability to God and man may not always be there. Towards their members the churches have lost power over the decades. This can be regretted, but it also avoids abuses. I think a serious problem is when the churches just do not care that their power structures exclude so many people from the sacraments and, through this, often from effective pastoral care, too.

Christian pluralism: a check on power

One church is enough of a choice

When permanent missionary work began in the country in 1875, the two Presbyterian missions from Scotland divided the country up between themselves, not yet formally, but effectively. The Free Church of Scotland Mission took the northern part (Livingstonia Mission), the Church of Scotland Mission took the southern part (Blantyre Mission, 1876). In 1889 Livingstonia Mission, feeling that its sphere was too big, allotted the area in between the two missions to the Dutch Reformed Church Mission. These

³⁶ The Kamwana Movement was among other things a protest against this, and quite a successful one. See J.C. Chakanza, *Voices of Preachers in Protest. The Ministries of Elliot Kamwana and Wilfred Gudu*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1998. For further reference see: Harry Langworthy, "Africa for the African": *The Life of Joseph Booth*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1996, esp. pp. 195-248; W.C. Chirwa, "Masokwa Eliot Kenan Kamwana Chirwa: His Religious and Political Activities, and Impact in Nkhata Bay, 1908-1956," *Journal of Social Science* (Zomba) 12 (1985), pp. 21-43.

³⁷ Research done by Patrick Makondesa, 1995.

three missions understood themselves as being of the same faith, and as being capable of evangelizing the country. There was no real room for any other missions, except maybe at the fringes of the territory allotted. When the Anglican UMCA came back into Malawi from what is now Tanzania in 1881 and finally in 1885, there was no objection to them establishing their mission on Likoma Island and from there serving the eastern (now Mozambican and Tanzanian) shores of the Lake, but as soon as they moved across the Lake to Nkhota Kota and tended to spread from there this was seen as an infringement on mission comity.³⁸

For the missionaries the division of the country into mission spheres of influence implied the vision of a slow but gradual and inevitable process of conversion to the Christian faith. In this process the power to contend with was not so much African Traditional Religion (that would give way in due course), but Islam. When Christianity came to the predominantly Yao population around the Lake, these were mostly turning to Islam. The missions' policy was largely one of containment, of attempting to reach people with Christianity before Islam would reach them and thus stopping Islam from gaining any further ground. This policy was by and large successful. There was never anything like a comity agreement between Christianity and Islam, but in practice a similar division of territory developed.

This mission comity was often declared to be a means to expedite the spread of the gospel. Duplication of effort and competition between missions was to be avoided so that all forces could be concentrated on the spread of the gospel.³⁹ This was all true to some extent, but mission comity was also about delineation of power. The stated aim of comity was cooperation, but in reality separation of spheres of influence and distribution of power was the theme. "Do not infringe on my territory, and I will not infringe on your territory. And if we all behave nicely, we can perhaps cooperate a bit, too (Bible translation, hymn books, printing)."

Through comity each mission would win a Christian monopoly in its area (and by that, in most cases, and educational monopoly, too). Therefore mission comity was about limitation of religious liberty. You can chose your religion (African Traditional Religion, Islam, Christianity), but you have no

³⁸ John McCracken, *Politics and Christianity in Malawi*, p. 125. The UMCA, on principle, never accepted comity agreements.

³⁹ William Carey, *An Enquiry into the Obligation of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen*, Leicester 1792, p. 84.

choice as to what kind of Christianity to choose. If you want a different brand of the Christian faith, you must physically move to that particular brand's territory. Truth became a matter of geography; not only truth but also education. Since the colonial government was little interested in providing any education to its subjects, leaving this to the missions to provide, and since mission education varied widely according to vision, quality and means, you would have no choice here, either. There was also a racist element in it, since comity limited religious choice for Africans, but not for Europeans, thus creating a two class system of truth. The argument advanced was that the "historic divisions of Christianity in Europe meant nothing to the African," so why introduce him (and even less so, her) to them? But how can the struggle for truth mean everything for Europeans (so much that even now the missions and churches cannot unite at all, some not even share in communion) and nothing for Africans? Obviously because truth is not important to them! They are human beings of a different type. This two class system of truth also had the advantage that the missionaries and their churches did not need to grapple with the issue of how to reconcile truth and unity. Comity cemented and therefore secured division.

Looking at it from the individual's side, mission comity meant mission control. The missions could set the rules according to their insights. If the mission decided that a 4 year catechumenate was required to achieve baptism (to be admitted to it), then it did not matter that in the NT converts were baptized sometimes on the spot on the very day of their conversion.⁴⁰ And if "Thou shalt have only one wife" was to be the first of the eleven commandments in Africa, it did not matter a bit that the law of Moses counts only ten. Mission comity is a thing of the past in Malawi,⁴¹ but the ideas and feelings connected to it still have not died. Just as mission comity cemented the status quo so today many churches, usually the older ones, would like their status quo to be safeguarded against infringement.

⁴⁰ The argument often advanced by the missions for their policy of slow conversion was that they preferred "quality against quantity," no biblical reason being given. This may be open to theological argument in theory, but in theology acted this policy would only apply in Africa, not in Europe. There quantity had the prerogative, and the same rule applied even for the Europeans in Malawi, who were able to obtain the sacraments so easily.

⁴¹ Not so in Congo where church comity, perpetuating mission comity, is still enforced by the government with the help of the leadership of the Église du Christ au Congo against the wishes of so many Protestant church members.

Terminology betrays the attitude: New churches are break away churches, if someone leaves one's own church that sheep was surely stolen,⁴² revival movements are separatist, and any dissident is motivated by quest for power or lax morals.⁴³ Malawi is renowned for its high receptivity to Christianity, but also for its Christian pluralism. A bit of church history may help in understanding.

The Joseph Booth factor

Joseph Booth was a converted atheist of English origin who came from Australia.⁴⁴ His training was not theology but business, and since he received his call to missionary work late in life, he did not fit into the (power-)structures. So the various missions he applied to rejected him as being too old. Though in the missions' structures there was no room to accommodate him, the call was still on him.⁴⁵ Belonging to an innovative group of Baptists,⁴⁶ and being in contact with an innovative and alternative missionary movement, the interdenominational faith missions,⁴⁷ he turned

⁴² There is rarely any talk of sheep running away.

⁴³ Assuming that quest for power and lax morals do not occur among leaders of established churches.

⁴⁴ For his life see the extensive biography by Booth's great grandson: Harry Langworthy, *"Africa for the African": The Life of Joseph Booth*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1996. *For his years in New Zealand and Australia see Klaus Fiedler, *The Making of a Maverick Missionary. Joseph Booth in Australasia*, Zomba: Kachere, 2008. This book compliments (and in a few points corrects) Langworthy's very brief description of those years.

⁴⁵ His wife Mary Jane shared the call, but died of pneumonia 14 days before the intended departure from Australia (Klaus Fiedler, *The Making of a Maverick Missionary. Joseph Booth in Australasia*, Zomba: Kachere, 2008, p. 74).

⁴⁶ This group can be classified as the "Tabernacle Baptists." They were Baptists in doctrine and practice, but innovative in their concepts. The most famous Baptist Tabernacle was the Metropolitan Tabernacle of the famous preacher Charles Haddon Spurgeon in London. Their churches were to be "for the masses," therefore they were not to look "Gothic" like the traditional churches (Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Alles zur Ehre Gottes. Autobiographie*, Wuppertal und Kassel: Oncken, 1984, p. 219, translated from Susannah Spurgeon and Joseph Harald (eds), *C.H. Spurgeon. Autobiography*, London, 1897-1910 (4 vls).)

⁴⁷ The first faith mission was the China Inland Mission, founded in 1865 by Hudson and Maria Taylor. For Africa the main early faith mission founders were Fanny and Grattan Guinness. For a detailed study of the faith missions in Africa see: Klaus Fiedler, Klaus Fiedler, *The Story of Faith Missions*. Regnum/Lynx: Oxford, 1994;

to one of their innovative concepts, namely that of the "self-supporting industrial mission."⁴⁸ Such a mission would be independent of existing power structures. Initial capital would be needed to establish such a mission, but that would be all, and once profitability was gained, its profits could finance further expansion. Thus a chain of self supporting missions could be established easily.⁴⁹ In line with general faith mission thinking and practice of his time, he had no intention to compete with the existing missions, intending to start at least 50 miles away from the nearest of them. But economic realities and political circumstances made him establish the first two missions in easy reach of Limbe, the centre of transportation close to Blantyre Mission. For Blantyre Mission Joseph Booth was a direct competitor. He (and the missionaries who soon joined him) did not intend to "steal sheep," and though it happened that people would leave the (Blantyre Mission) Presbyterian Church to join his church, the number was small.⁵⁰ More threatening was the competition for potential converts, especially as it was easier to achieve baptism in the Zambezi Industrial Mission than in Blantyre Mission. But possibly most threatening was the competition for labour, because Booth paid higher wages, thus "spoiling the prices," or, to use the language of power, breaking the cartel established by missions, settlers and government.⁵¹

Joseph Booth brought confusion into the neatly arranged world of mission comity not only by introducing a new mission or two, but by

Reprinted by Regnum Books Int., 1995, with the subtitle: *From Hudson Taylor to Present Day Africa*.

⁴⁸ In Malawi there were two concurrent concepts of Industrial Missions, the Presbyterian type and the Booth type. The Presbyterian type emphasized industrial training, whereas the Booth type emphasized missionary self support as a financial strategy. For Booth's concept, which he based on some of William Carey's ideas, see: Joseph Booth, "The Greatest Work in the World - A Plea for Missionary Enterprise," *Missionary Review of the World* (New York), 5 (Aug. 1892), pp. 573-580.

⁴⁹ Though Booth had been a successful business man in New Zealand and in Australia, his profitability calculations for industrial missions were notoriously on the optimistic side (Harry Langworthy, *The Life of Joseph Booth*, p. 33).

⁵⁰ That John Chilembwe, his first convert, was rebaptized by him is not true. The John Chilembwe in the baptism register of Blantyre Mission was a different person.

⁵¹ Here is a parallel to mission comity, where truth is decided upon by geography. Here the employers decide alone on what a living wage is or if a living wage is needed at all.

introducing, with different levels of personal involvement, eight of them, either in the southern or in the central region of Malawi. Here they are under their present names, with names of missions in brackets where applicable:

Zambezi Evangelical Church (Zambezi Industrial Mission) 1892

Africa Evangelical Church⁵² (Nyasa Industrial Mission) 1893

Churches of Christ (Gowa), (Baptist Industrial Mission of Scotland) 1896

Church of Christ (Namikango) 1906

Seventh Day Baptists 1898/1910

Seventh-day Adventists (Malamulo) 1902

African Baptist Assembly (Providence Industrial Mission) 1900

Jehovah's Witnesses (Elliot Kamwana) 1908⁵³

This religious pluralism can be partly ascribed to his character. He was ever the pioneer and had problems working with fellow missionaries. On the other hand there is much more consistency in it than easily meets the eye, if one looks at it not from the classical missions' point of view but from the point of view of his own spiritual background. He was in many ways a religious radical: a convert from atheism, in Auckland (New Zealand) member of a very innovative Tabernacle type Baptist church, a spare time street evangelist in Brisbane, and in touch with the innovative faith mission movement. His political views were radical, too: he was convinced that Africans and Europeans were equal, not only in the eyes of God but also in real life (the church included).⁵⁴ It is only natural that a radical will clash with established power structures, which are, by their very nature, middle of the road. Often Booth was unsuccessful, as radicals usually are. But then radicals are needed, if not for success but for vision, and any society needs visions. Through the efforts of Booth and the missions which he brought

⁵² Also known as Ntambanyama Synod of the United Evangelical Church which also comprises the Zambezi Evangelical Church (Mitsidi Synod), and the Chididi Synod (Africa Evangelical Fellowship).

⁵³ He repudiated this allegiance in 1910 and tried to win [with small success] the Jehovah's Witnesses' congregations in Tongaland for the Seventh Day Baptists (Harry Langworthy, *The Life of Joseph Booth*, pp. 243ff.)

⁵⁴ This found expression in his book: Joseph Booth, *Africa for the African*, Baltimore 1897; in his petition to Queen Victoria, demanding independence for Malawi before 1920; in his support for the African National Congress in South Africa, etc.

into the country, any semblance of mission comity was finally destroyed by 1910. This meant that each mission's power was limited by the power of Africans to walk to an alternative mission, which in many areas of the densely populated south was not a long walk.

The Chilembwe Domingo factor

Early unchallenged ecclesiastical power was not only limited by the introduction of new missions,⁵⁵ but also through the introduction of "African Independency." Why, after all, should a mission always be led by a white man? Were not all human beings equal? In the development of this concept Joseph Booth had a hand, too, but its main exponents in early Malawi were John Chilembwe and Charles Domingo. For both of them "African independency" was neither racist nor exclusive, nor was it in any way syncretistic. But they both vividly questioned the assumptions of those in power: That the white race was somehow better, that churches must be led by white missionaries, that there are established mission spheres. Neither Booth nor Chilembwe were anti-missionary. Chilembwe was an American missionary himself,⁵⁶ and Domingo cooperated happily with Joseph Booth residing in Cape Town. Both, as so many of their successors, would have been very happy if they could have received more support from abroad. Though they were neither enemies of white missionaries nor in other ways exclusive, their existence was not always taken kindly. The "native controlled missions," as the then government termed them, were not liked. These missions intruded into spheres which the white missions had reserved for themselves, and they offered venues of advancement which the established missions did not offer. Sacraments were available under easier conditions, "native missions" might be in closer reach than the other missions, people with lesser education could still contribute to church leadership, involvement of some who had been disciplined in their previous church was more easily possible.⁵⁷ While all these elements are important, a genuine and personal search for truth must not be left out of the equation.

⁵⁵ Not all new missions belonged to the post-classical/evangelical type, the most important new missions were the two Roman Catholic Missions (Montfortians and White Fathers) which started to claim a share of the potential converts after the Protestants had considered them all to be theirs for 25 years.

⁵⁶ Albeit "a foreign missionary in his own land."

⁵⁷ For an insightful analysis of the various aspects see Harry Langworthy, *"Africa for the African": The Life of Joseph Booth*, Blantyre: CLAIM, 1996, pp. 219-273.

Since John Chilembwe, Elliot Kamwana, Charles Domingo and Alexander Makwinja, African Instituted Churches have provided a viable alternative to mission instituted churches, giving people full religious freedom, to choose between religions, between denominations and between races. Though the AICs have proven to be a viable alternative, they cannot make exclusive claims nor should exclusive claims be made for them. It is only a minority of Malawians who have opted to join African Instituted Churches. Therefore the exclusive claim that only AICs show what real African Christianity is, is based on ideology. The term AICs is a sociological term, though it is often misused to give or to imply a theological definition of the churches involved. Useful as the term is in analyzing early Malawian church history, I find that the term has lost much of its usefulness for today, and has some dangers. The danger seems to me to be that the term does not take the very different churches seriously by lumping them all together. I propose that they should be taken just as any other church, taking each (even if there are so many!) as an entity of its own, deserving a separate categorization. Naming them according to principles imposed on them seems to be an unwarranted one-sided exercise of power. Once each church is taken seriously, differences will become clear, groups of related churches will become visible. This approach requires more effort, but will avoid the undue use of power, even if it is only the power of naming.

New missions after the end of missions

In traditional study of missions it was (and still often is) assumed that the time of the coming of independence to the classical churches in Africa (coupled with political independence) would mean the end of Western missions, at least in the traditional sense of missionaries actually establishing new churches. Reality never matched this assumption, though it is still dear to missiologists and church leaders. In Malawi since 1960 the number of new missions has been considerable.

1960 Southern Baptist Mission

1962 WELS (USA)⁵⁸

1964 Christian Brethren⁵⁹

1973 Free Methodist Church

⁵⁸ WELS is: Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, 3512 West North Ave, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53208.

⁵⁹ I found only a few. 20,000 seems to me to be a clear overestimate, also regarding the assumed size of the average congregation.

- 1977 Church of God of Prophecy
- 1978 Pentecostal Assembly of Canada
- 1980 Evangelical Brethren
- 1985 Brethren in Christ Church (USA)
- 1990 Liebenzell Mission (Evangelical Baptist Church)
- 1990 African Bible College

The list, which is not complete, indicates that Christian pluralism has become ever more plural since Malawi became independent and the classical Protestant missions withdrew from direct missionary work in Malawi. Often these "new" missions are ignored or considered just as a nuisance. But this would be to look at them from the point of view of the established churches, who feel endangered by them. Instead it is possible to look at them from the point of view of those who joined them. How then did they come to Malawi?

The [Southern] Baptist Mission came in 1960 on its own accord, feeling that Malawi would be a worthy field to which to extend their endeavours from Zimbabwe. Though its entry into Malawi definitely was a foreign idea, many Malawians welcomed the new mission, so that the Baptist Convention now has something like 80,000 members.⁶⁰ Obviously the mission's efforts were not outdated for many Malawians.

The Lutheran Church of Central Africa came to Malawi from Zambia on the request of people who had been in contact with it in Zambia and of those who had read their literature in Malawi or had relatives in Zambia in touch with it. The LCCA is a strongly conservative Lutheran church, which is not in fellowship with most other Lutheran churches, because its conception of truth differs from theirs. By sending missionaries to Malawi the LCCA has introduced a new opportunity to search for the truth.⁶¹

The Free Methodist missionary work in Malawi was started by a Malawian, Amos Phiri, who had been a migrant worker in Zimbabwe. The Free Methodists are a small church, but growing fast. They also introduced

⁶⁰ The statistics made by the [Southern] Baptist Mission in Malawi give much higher figures, but the system of counting was faulty.

⁶¹ This theological separatism does not exclude practical cooperation. An LCCA member, Ernst Wendland, is one of the main consultants for the new Bible translations into both Chewa and Tumbuka.

a new variety of theological education, the modular approach.⁶² For the Free Methodist Church it is reported that in many places they found a niche at the fringe of the established churches, when people who had been members of these churches, but led in no way a Christian life, experienced a clear conversion and a drastic change of life. I can support this observation: there is indeed a big fringe of church members who lack any real Christian experience, though they may have attended a few classes or even all. And I am convinced that it is better for them to attain salvation in a church like the Free Methodists than not to attain it in a more established church, more respectable and correctly politically engaged though it may be.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church came to Malawi with returning Malawians who had lived for many years in Tanzania and had been active Lutherans there. Why should a return to their motherland mean a change of denomination? Faith, after all, is not a matter of geography but of conviction and experience.

This list of "newcomers" could be extended considerably. Common to all is that they are in the country not because they wanted to be here but because Malawians want them to be here. Christian pluralism is a living option for many Malawians, not so much for outside missions.

Change is the power of the powerless

Churches are often rigid structures. Though theological pluralism is often welcomed or even proclaimed, organizational pluralism is not. Power in church is usually top-down, with the clergy in the central institutions dominating the structures. The plurality of churches is a check to this power. A young man may have a call to Christian ministry, but his church can't recognize it because his educational achievements are a bit below what is required for entry into the church's college for training pastors. In a different church the entrance qualifications are slightly lower, and he fits in. Assuming that God in his calling is not bound to a minimum educational standard, is it really bad if the young man became a minister of the gospel in a church different from the one he was born into? Many churches, actually most, give women limited opportunities for Christian ministry, at least where either sacramental ministry or leadership is involved. I think it is

⁶² Church growth and modular theological education were the theme of the PhD thesis of Henry Church (University of Malawi). Published as: Henry Church, *Theological Education that Makes a Difference*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2002.

good that churches exist in Malawi where a woman can be ordained like the Assemblies of God, the Free Methodists or some of the recent Charismatic churches.⁶³ Such a church offers the option of joining it, but even more so its very existence may be a challenge to rethink some theological issues. Change is the option of those left out by the system, and therefore the possibility of a change of affiliation is a wholesome check on excessive ecclesiastical power. If, therefore, Malawians are "good shoppers of religious goods" (J.C. Chakanza), this should be seen primarily as a possibility for the empowerment of the powerless.

There are so many churches

Christian pluralism is a reality everywhere in Malawi where there are Christians. One of the most pluralistic areas is Thyolo - Luchenza - Phalombe. Within one hour's walk from Migowi, in Phalombe District, There are 28 churches to chose from, belonging to 22 different denominations.⁶⁴

The situation in a major town like Nkhatabay, where building is more costly, is less varied. There are three classical churches in the centre of the city (with two smaller "intruders"), but around the centre there is a group of other churches. The situation in Lunzu Township also shows a lot of diversity. There are 12 churches representing 12 denominations. The biggest church is the Roman Catholic, seating about 1000, the CCAP seats about 500, the 10 remaining churches can hold about as many attenders as the two classical churches. There are also areas where the original "established" church actually has become a minority option. I am sure that even a casual look at the situation in Migowi will convince everyone that religious pluralism is a reality in Malawi, and that is what the people want. This pluralism must be taken as genuinely Malawian, it cannot be explained by outside influences, though they could never have been strong enough for such a variety, unless the people really wanted it.

⁶³ *Since this was written, CCAP Livingstonia Synod and CCAP Blantyre Synod have joined the group, but recently Livingstonia Synod barred unmarried women from training for the pastorate.

⁶⁴ For a sketch map by Patrick Makondesa, see Kenneth R. Ross (ed), *God, People and Power in Malawi*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1996, p. 209.

The religious landscape in Malawi is changing

Up to now almost all churches in Malawi are growing. This is deceptive, since much of this impressive growth is due to the tremendous population growth, which saw a doubling of Malawi's population under Kamuzu. In addition there was plenty of conversion growth, with the greater part of the non Muslim population becoming Christian. I have no reliable religious statistics for Malawi, and I think they do not exist. But some evidence of developments there is. From some detailed evidence I have come to doubt the conception of an ever growing share of AICs in the total number of Christians, as seems to be the case in South Africa. A number of AICs seems to be declining while others are growing or being born. The classical churches seem to be still growing, but definitely below the population growth rate. Almost all evangelical churches register growth above the rate of population growth, with a very considerable growth of the Seventh-day Adventists. The fastest growing group of denominations are the Charismatic churches.

At this time two major changes take place: The number of people who are neither Christians nor Muslims is converging against zero, and since the conversion rate between Christians and Muslims is close to zero, this means that the reservoir of potential converts for the Christian churches has largely dried out. The other major change is the declining birth rate. The birth rate is still high, but has been declining over the last decade.⁶⁵ And comparative statistics from countries like Indonesia and Kenya show that a further decline can be expected in the immediate future, so that perhaps in 15 or 20 years the growth rate will be closer to zero.⁶⁶

This projected scenario will mean a tremendous change in the churches' power relations. The early established Protestant churches, both of the classical and the evangelical variety, will seriously decline in numbers. On the one hand this may endanger their capacity of supporting central structures like training institutions and social institutions like schools and hospitals. On the other hand this may not turn out to be a problem anymore than it is now, because due to economic liberalization and declining birth rate economic growth is to be expected that could easily

⁶⁵ *Malawi Demographic and Health Survey 1992*, Zomba 1994, p. 4. At present levels, a woman will give birth to an average of 6.7 children during her lifetime. In Kenya the decline of the birth rate has been very remarkable.

⁶⁶ *2014: The decline is indeed continuing, but slower than I expected when I wrote the article.

make up for numerical losses. Then the question remains if there will be enough spiritual power, but here predictions are impossible. The evangelical denominations will be then in a stronger position than they are now. They will have to face many issues, which had to be tackled by the classical churches in the 1960s and 1970s, like independence, self support, education. This will demand many additional resources. I have little evidence from which to make any projection for the future of the so called African Instituted Churches. It is easy to predict that quite a number of them will decline or close down, because that is happening already. But the challenge for them to fulfill the demands of the people will grow with a decline in population growth, which will most probably go along with improved education.⁶⁷ The Roman Catholic Church will also start on a membership decline, but more slowly than the major Protestant churches, because usually the Roman Catholic Church loses less members to other churches than the Protestants, and it also rarely gives birth to new churches. Should these projected changes take place, it will mean for the churches that they all must learn to be more careful (or more Christian) in their administration of power.

Revival as Counter Power

No church can be sure of retaining its position and status. Even in times when there was only one legal church, the "territorial church" or the "established church," members could reduce their participation in the life of the church, they could concentrate on worldly matters, or they could even give up their individual faith. They could, and often did indeed, become Christians in name only. Nominal Christianity is a major issue in Malawi today. The church is very much a part of the social structure, its transition ceremonies are much coveted, church attendance is seen as normal. The individual's Christian faith is guided through *makalasi*, and if someone goes through all of them, he or she is surely a Spirit filled Christian.⁶⁸ This easy identification of society and church leads to a transfer of position from society to church. As it was put by one contributor:

⁶⁷ *The issue of the changing role of African Independent Churches and the influence of education is being addressed by: Wezi Gondwe, A History of the Last Church of God and His Christ International from 1916 to the Present (2014), MA, Mzuzu University, 2015..

⁶⁸ This theology acted was clearly formulated in the statement of the Blantyre Synod's Administrators against the Born Agains in their membership.

Most of them found their way back to church, only to find a generation of the clergy that had not been prepared to handle professional people. For fear of losing them the church gave them positions of leadership to help beef up the collection.⁶⁹

This kind of accommodation of the ("established") church to society will help the church for a certain time to keep up its numbers, appearance and social role, but will not prevent an inner erosion from taking place and becoming visible after some time, as has happened in Western Europe over the last decades. Therefore in many churches there is a longing for inner renewal, which would enhance the real involvement of its members not just by structural reform or pious appeal but by an inner change of heart and attitude. This longing is expressed in different terms, one frequently used is *revival*.⁷⁰ For a church to remain viable, revival or renewal is needed, and many church leaders implicitly or explicitly wish for it or pray for it. But then they must be aware that revival is not easy to manage when it comes. Revival is power, new spiritual power, people suddenly do things from their own heart which the church leaders had exhorted them in vain to do for so long. But the fact that they do it on their own is a challenge to established church power. Revival is always counter-power. This power may have similar objectives to those of the church leadership, but the source of its power is not in the establishment. A revival creates a lot of spiritual power. The church establishment may welcome this new spiritual power in principle, but will have problems in controlling it.

The Nkhonde Revival

It seems that Malawi shared in the worldwide spiritual decline associated with the events that crystallized into the student revolution of 1968 and a strong longing for flower power and socialism. On the more local level, independence and politics played a role. Though the new government had come to power carried on the shoulders of a nationalist movement which was led by Presbyterians who often had a strong personal Christian commitment, many peoples' energies were absorbed by the feeling for the

⁶⁹ Wambali Mkandawire, "Music and Power" (Theology of Life Essay).

⁷⁰ This word is not to be confused with its secondary American meaning where revival may mean an evangelistic campaign. Though they have sometimes led to a revival, it is wrong to equate anticipated results with the attempt.

new era. This era had clearly pseudo religious tendencies, as witnessed by the party usurping a Christmas hymn to make Kamuzu the saviour.⁷¹

In spite of Kamuzu's religious claims ("church elder of the Church of Scotland"), national worship services, the President reading Bible texts at services where he chose to be present, etc.), the party tried to win the people's first allegiance, if necessary to the detriment of religion. In some cases Christianity was actually mocked, like in this song from Mlowe in Usisya:

Kubatizika naji gha waka	To be baptized with no reasons
Pakudya chinjwa panji ndi njala	You eat the eucharist you are still hungry
Kweni chokuzilwa mtima	Only to be good in your heart
Wa munthu uwenga atuwa.	To be a good person.

It is always difficult to trace the origins of a revival, and for this one I do not have enough material even to try that.⁷² An early appearance of the revival was in the North, adjacent to Tanzania, amongst the northernmost ethnic group in Malawi along the Lake shore, the Nkhonde, who are very similar to the Nyakyusa across the border. The revival, which touched mainly Karonga and Rumphi Districts, was borne on the wings of songs in Nkhonde,⁷³ which

⁷¹ Among the many programmes that the radio station had made in praise of the Lion of Malawi, the MBC Band was given a special programme which featured twice Saturday. To show that at this time government was determined to use anything to make Dr Banda the redeemer late Wilson Chirwa made the signature for the recorded programme with a line from a Christian song that was originally from Zambian Presbyterian Christians hymns. It said *chalo chose chilecimba Aleluya Hosana Mau Kamuzu*, which means the whole world is singing Alleluya Hosanna the child Kamuzu. The only difference with the original Zambian tune is that Mr. Chirwa's version adds the name Kamuzu and leaves out *alitufyaliwe* which appears in the original Zambian version. It means he has been born for us.

⁷² It is a pity that so little research has been done on the more recent history of the mainline churches. Most dissertations and monographs deal with the origins and the early years of the three Presbyterian Synods. The dissertation dealing with the most recent period seems to be S.D. Chipangwi, *Why People Join the Christian Church; Trends in Church Growth in Blantyre Synod of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian 1960-1975* (PhD Aberdeen, 1978).

⁷³ Wambali Mkandawire, *Music and Power*.

makes it probable that it came across the border from the Nyakyusa area.⁷⁴ Its leadership were young people, its name *Ukalina* implied the same. Its preaching was against sin, but what impressed people first of all was its music. Its musical style was contemporary, and it had similarities with some of the Lake shore types of music. The music was organized around the choirs, which provided almost unlimited room for involvement and also for leadership. Contrary to "established" church music, they added their own body movements, called *mabiti*. This term shows that their musical acculturation was a step of modernization, not an emphasis on traditional values.

The revival gave a voice to the voiceless, the young. It also gave a voice to a minority, by using the local language, not the established church's lingua franca Tumbuka. By providing an alternative power, the revival movement helped many people to regain their allegiance to Christ. In some way the movement was accepted, for example the young people were allowed to preach in church. In other aspects, touching established structures, it was not. The new music (witness of new spiritual power) was permitted as "chorals" besides the "hymns." But the hymns remained the real thing,⁷⁵ and this is reflected by the fact that the present Nkhonde hymnbook contains none of them, only real hymns, translated either from the West or from Ngoni hymns which went back to the very first revival in Malawi at the beginning of the last century,⁷⁶ the Keswick type revival led by Donald Fraser. The question remains: Why were those early revival hymns accepted by the church and not the later ones?⁷⁷

The Revival in Zambia

Information is insufficient still, but it is obvious that a revival within the CCAP Zambia Synod also influenced Malawi. It started among the young people, the youth movement. The elders of the church condemned it as

⁷⁴ For the musical revival in Unyakyusa see Klaus Fiedler, *Christianity and African Culture. Conservative German Protestant Missionaries in Tanzania, 1900-1940*, Leiden: Brill, 1996, p. 141.

⁷⁵ This seems to be supported by James Tengatenga's observation that in quite a number of Anglican Churches the youths are permitted to sing choruses, but that the elders jealously guard their privilege of announcing the hymns.

⁷⁶ For a selection of Ngoni hymns with their English translations see Kenneth R. Ross (ed), *Christianity in Malawi*, Gweru: Mambo, 1996, (Kachere Book No. 3) pp. 49-67.

⁷⁷ This paragraph is based on: Wambali Mkandawire, *Music and Power*.

teaching wrong doctrines like the baptism of the Holy Spirit. They preached against it because the movement dropped the right kind of music and introduced innovations, finally they banned it. The young people then formed themselves into an interdenominational fellowship. When they felt that a fellowship was not enough, they turned it into a church, which was then attached to the CCAP. This happened in the 1980s.⁷⁸ Here the ingredients are the same: a revival, led by young people, which forms a counter-power in the established church; and, despite its claim to be the church for all Zambia, the church does not accommodate that which threatens established power. The revival also touched Malawi, but I have no details, only that the small drum and some other local instruments were allowed in churches in Blantyre Synod due to the revival in Zambia.⁷⁹

The 1970s Revival⁸⁰

In tune with spiritual developments worldwide and possibly also as a reaction against the religious demands of Kamuzuism, a distinct revival touched Malawi in the 1970s. It was primarily an interdenominational movement, touching most of all educated youths, and as such it had its centres in Blantyre, Lilongwe, Zomba and Mzuzu. The revival's main source were various evangelical para-church organizations like New Life for All or Scripture Union, which took the message to the streets, the schools and the churches. There was also some Pentecostal influence. This evangelical revival was consciously interdenominational, cooperating consciously with almost all Protestant churches, provided that these wanted the cooperation offered. Cooperation was not on a corporate base (para-church organization - denominational leadership) but on an individual and local base (cooperation with individuals or individual congregations). The revival converted many educated young people, who in many cases moved into positions of leadership not only in society but also in churches and para-church organizations. Many experienced conversion in this revival and

⁷⁸ Int Aaron Longwe, 1995.

⁷⁹ Personal communication from an elder of Nkana Congregation near Zomba, late in 1992.

⁸⁰ *For a detailed study of the Blantyre Revival see: Bright Kawamba, *The Blantyre Spiritual Awakening 1969-1986: an Antecedent of the Charismatic Movement in Malawi*, University of Malawi, 2013.

heard the call to the ministry. Some of them, like Emmanuel Chinkwita,⁸¹ Wambali Mkandawire⁸² and Akim Chirwa,⁸³ also influenced more recent political developments. A lasting effect of the revival was to establish the para-church organizations as a permanent feature of the Christian scene in Malawi, and as such as a permanent source of enrichment and competition for the various denominations. The para-church movements provide alternative venues for spiritual nurture and for the development of talents of leadership or service. It is telling that the Christian Council of Malawi, the established spiritual authority for Chancellor College,⁸⁴ has not been able to appoint a chaplain to Chancellor College since the 1970s, and if one would take away SCOM and Life Ministry and other interdenominational ministries, the situation of Protestant Christianity at Chancellor College would be bleak indeed. But I am convinced that, asked officially, the Christian Council would still claim spiritual responsibility for the Protestants at Chancellor College.

The Charismatic Churches⁸⁵

The next wave of revival to touch Malawi was the Charismatic Revival, which had started in America in the 1960s, and had developed, independently of America, a strong base in Nigeria in the 1970s and in other part of Africa. Its emphasis on healing, wealth and power clearly shows its deep African roots, though some of its outward trapping came from the West.⁸⁶ As in Nigeria and America—and different from the

⁸¹ *A Baptist Convention pastor and the effective leader of the opposition in the transition to multi-party democracy 1993-1994; later ambassador and recently member of the 2014 Electoral Commission.

⁸² *Since many years a most famous Gospel musician, combining ethno and modern sounds.

⁸³ *Currently the Principal of Baptist Theological Seminary of Malawi in Lilongwe.

⁸⁴ This is documented by the fact that in the early years it contributed a flat for the Chaplain to the campus. The flat has since been taken over by the University, when the Christian Council had no use for it.

⁸⁵ *For a thorough study of the Charismatic Churches focusing on Inculturation, see: Rhodian Munyenyebe, *Christianity and Socio-cultural Issues. The Charismatic Movement and Contextualization of the Gospel in Malawi*, Zomba: Kachere; Mzuzu: Mzuni Press, 2011.

⁸⁶ *Two theses show this clearly: Kibutu Ngimbi, *Les Nouvelles Églises Indépendantes Africaines (NAIC). Un phénomène ecclésial observé au Congo/Kinshasa et auprès de ses extensions en Europe occidentale*, PhD,

Pentecostal Revival of 1906—the Charismatic Revival in Malawi was strongly a middle class movement, and as such it could easily pick up pieces from the preceding interdenominational evangelical revival. The combination of middle class income and charismatic spiritual fervour made the revival financially viable, sometimes even powerful. Thus the revival could largely finance itself, a thing many established churches could hardly dream of.⁸⁷ The fact that it could finance itself made the revival independent. Groups that do not ask for money and are able to finance themselves are possibly the strongest challenge to any established church authority. They do not need to struggle for a slice of the financial cake that the church leadership is administering, they just bake their own cake.⁸⁸

The Charismatic Revival, again in common with America and Nigeria, had no intention at all to form new churches. Their aim was just renewal, their own and that of their churches or (especially in Nigeria) their para-church organizations.⁸⁹ There, many who underwent the renewal experience felt that they found insufficient spiritual nurture in the regular diet offered by their church, so they started to form fellowships. These fellowships would often command their primary spiritual allegiance, but that would not detract their members from being or becoming faithful members of their church, where they are often the mainstay of a congregation and

Evangelical Theological Faculty, Leuven, 2000; Bosco Bangura, *The Charismatic Movement in Sierra Leone (1980-2010): A Missio-historical Analysis in View of African Culture, Prosperity Gospel and Power Theology*, PhD, Evangelical Theological Faculty, Leuven, 2013.

⁸⁷ Here it must not be overlooked, though, that the established churches had more structures like schools and hospitals to sustain.

⁸⁸ In ecumenical theology *acted* there is often the idea that there exists a financial cake of fixed (and unfortunately always limited) proportions, which needs to be guarded against too many demands, especially from newcomers (who are they after all to share in it!). It is often overlooked that new spiritual power generates more financial power, so that the cake can grow or new cakes can be produced.

⁸⁹ The immense role of the evangelical parachurch organizations in Nigeria for the birth of the Charismatic Movement there is clearly shown by Matthew Ojo, *and in Malawi the picture was similar (Bright Kawamba, *The Blantyre Spiritual Awakening 1969-1986: an Antecedent of the Charismatic Movement in Malawi*, MA, University of Malawi, 2013.) In Malawian para-church movements like SCOM there is a strong tendency to replace Evangelical spirituality by Charismatic spirituality (Boston Khonje, *A Historical Study of the Establishment and Contribution of the Student Christian Organization of Malawi (SCOM) to the Malawian Society (1961-2012)*, MA, Mzuzu University, 2014.

sometimes its main problem, too. All revival fellowship movements have a tendency to develop gradually into churches. With the Holiness Revival in Sweden at the turn of the century it took at least two generations, in the German Holiness revival the stage has not yet been reached, in the Pentecostal Revival it usually took only a few years, because the established churches helped. In the Charismatic Revival a period of 5-10 years seems to be a good estimate for many fellowships to mature into new denominations, but a good number of fellowships seem not to go this way. They remain strictly interdenominational or attached to one denomination. This process has led to the establishment of more than 20 Charismatic denominations in Blantyre alone. Some have only one congregation and may not intend to branch out, some have several congregations within Blantyre, and others see the whole nation as their field of activity.

In the study of Christianity in Africa often a differentiation is made between "mission" churches and "African Instituted Churches." I do not think that this distinction is really helpful in interpreting the Charismatic churches in Blantyre. The first of them, Blantyre Christian Centre, was established by a Westerner [though a local one, not a missionary], Rev Barbara Tippet.⁹⁰ Others have Western connections. Others again originated in Nigeria or have strong connections that way. So they would be African instituted, but not Malawian instituted. These differentiations, interesting as they might be for the church historian, seem to major on minors. What the Charismatic churches have in common is their spirituality, their local leadership, their middle class power, their youthfulness, and that they offer a deeply spiritual, deeply African and deeply modern approach to the Christian faith. In this they are a serious challenge to the established churches (and to evangelical churches, coming from a revival closer to the Charismatic Revival, yet different from it). A mere list of the sequence of the birth of new Charismatic churches may give some idea of their power in a changing Christian environment:

Name	started	Founder/leader
Blantyre Christian Centre	1980	Barbara Tippet
Agape	February 1982	Pastor Mgala
Faith of God	1984	Pastor Matoga
Living Waters	January 1985	Pastor Ndovi

⁹⁰ *For its history see: Khetwayo Banda, Word Alive Ministries International (WAMI) and its Wholistic Mission, MA, Mzuzu University 2012.

Glad Tidings	January 1986	Group initiated
All for Jesus	January 1993	Pastor Zalimba
Flames of Victory	September 1993	Pastor Katchire
Calvary Family Church	March 1994	Pastor Mbewe
Vineyard	November 1994	Pastor Gama

For nine of these churches the membership was estimated as ranging between 150 and 1000, which, for 20 churches makes an estimate of 4000 seem likely. To that figure the number of children, friends, adherents and enquirers can be added, and a figure of 10-15,000 for the total Christian community of the Charismatic churches in Blantyre City alone may not be an overestimate.

Most Charismatic churches in Blantyre started as fellowships, a form in which they operated for several years. The next step was to start a church in rented rooms, then the erection of a church building would follow. Three churches at least have entered the next stage of establishing additional institutions. There are three Bible Schools, a bookshop, AIDS counselling and other ministries. Blantyre Christian Centre in 1994 opened its own primary school, not following the pattern of the classical missions' schools, but that of the European/American/South African Christian private (elite middle class) schools, in keeping with its sociological context. Here the financial power of the owners will probably produce a better start for their children, very useful at a time of declining quality in public primary schools. Thus the church answers real and felt needs of its constituent community.⁹¹ From the outside the Charismatic church movement looks pretty disunited, and some mainline representatives see it as a chaotic bunch of malcontents. There is a certain amount of disunity and occasional discontent,⁹² but why then should Christian unity be necessarily expressed in organizational unity? Charismatics see Christian unity as unity in the Spirit, and that can be obtained even with disunity of organization, and they could easily point out that sometimes in churches with perfect organizational unity the unity of the Spirit is lacking, and maybe sometimes even the Spirit. Organizational diversity includes the possibility of formal cooperation. This found formal expression within the Charismatic

⁹¹ Though this school and also the Bible Schools are clearly identified as Charismatic, they are also, in a way, interdenominational, since they accept and welcome applicants from both Charismatic and non charismatic churches.

⁹² Of the nine churches studied, two were started in disagreement with others.

community by the foundation of CHAPEL, the Charismatic and Pentecostal Churches association.

The Charismatic churches have a strong political involvement, with political claims not commensurate with their small number countrywide, but with the feelings of an elite that knows that numbers do not count when it comes to right or wrong, and equally that divine power is bigger than the power of human numbers. Though it cannot be taken as representing the whole Charismatic movement in Malawi, the case of Kamlepo Kalua as a candidate for the first democratic presidency is revealing of an understanding of divine power as unlimited, though adverse powers can temporarily be more powerful. Kalua made his concept very clear a few days before the election when he claimed that, in spite of the fact that his party was tiny and had only managed to field candidates in two constituencies, he was sure that God would give him the victory. The votes he got were as negligible as the size of his party. When I asked him after the election why he hadn't won he told me that he was still convinced that God had given him the victory, but that someone had taken it away. A similar approach to divine power was obvious in other Charismatic sections. Before the election there were regular prayer meetings to pray against a Muslim becoming president of Malawi,⁹³ and I heard that Satan had been bound so that no Muslim could become President of Malawi. I have not heard how or by whom Satan was untied in time for the election. Another report tells that some people were specific, indicating that God had told them in a vision, when they saw a President with Bible in his hand, indicating that a Christian and not a Muslim would rule Malawi. No clear explanation has been forthcoming as to why everything went the other way, except the proposition that "God's promises sometimes take years to be fulfilled."

These two instances may not have been official Charismatic theology, but they do belong to Charismatic theology acted. Official theology was expressed by CHAPEL, when it organized two days' of national prayers on the eve of the general election at Kwacha Conference Centre in Blantyre. Reports differ as to what specific requests were made to God facing the possibility of a Muslim becoming president, but there can be little doubt about a widespread conviction that Malawi, as a Christian country, should be ruled by a Christian.⁹⁴ After the defeat, Pastor Taulo Phiri became a kind

⁹³ At least one member of staff was invited to take part in these prayers, but refused.

⁹⁴ I have not found any information if any assessment was made of the spiritual value of the Christian confession of Chakufwa Chihana or Kamuzu Banda. This

of court chaplain to Kamuzu, an office which for him included not only the attempt to help the former president spiritually, but also to defend him and some of his claims publicly. What has been reported here most probably does not apply to all Charismatics, nor does it form a coherent picture yet.⁹⁵ However, it does portray aspects of their understanding of power, spiritual and worldly.

The Born Again controversy

Besides the Charismatic denominations there are many Charismatics who remain within the mainline churches, especially within the CCAP, Blantyre Synod. They would attend their Charismatic fellowship meetings, but otherwise be faithful (and often leading) CCAP members. Though not intending to be a threat to established church authority, they were perceived as such, and the church authorities led by the Deputy General Secretary in the absence of the General Secretary, attempted to rid the church of them or to bring them into conformity through a letter which told them either to stop shouting Hallelujah⁹⁶ or to get out of the CCAP, where one does no such things.

Some are bringing some kinds of fellowship which are contrary to the way our fellowships are organized and their teachings are also different. Some of these members have been advised to stop this new teaching but are stubborn and they still hold to it, but they had sworn in the church at their baptism that they will respect the advice of the church elders. For this reason we feel that we cannot hold them hence they should join the church of their choice.⁹⁷

The letter then proceeded to give the right understanding of new birth:

A person who is born in a Christian family - according to the established rules of the CCAP - is baptized while still a baby. Having grown he is accepted to be a Christian who receives the sacraments after he finishes to be taught in all the classes of the Holy Book. In

should have been done as in Charismatic language Christian is not a sociological term but a spiritual term implying conversion and commitment.

⁹⁵ *CHAPEL has since faded into oblivion.

⁹⁶ For a discussion of the use of Hallelujah in the Malawian context see: Jonathan Nkhoma, *Significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls and other Essays. Biblical and Early Christianity Studies from Malawi*, Mzuzu: Mzuni Press, 2013, pp. 163ff.

⁹⁷ Synod Office, Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Blantyre Synod - All Congregations, 11 January 1995.

this way this person receives the Holy Spirit and becomes a born again.⁹⁸

The letter stated clearly the overriding principle: follow established order, and you will be saved. Do not shout Hallelujah and do not forget to go through all the classes. Then the Holy Spirit will be yours.

The ultimate result of this attempt at cleansing the church from any deviant interpretations of the Gospel cannot yet be assessed. In my understanding the leadership of Blantyre Synod did not take fully into account that the Born Agains had their own effective structures to counteract the attempted expulsions. There is also support for the interpretation that the church leaders thought the Born Agains were just a group of young people, whereas in reality many of them had leading positions in the church. Whatever may have been in the minds of the authors of the letter, the Born Agains refused to be expelled from the church, and they were indeed able to negotiate from a position of strength. As I wrote this chapter no actual expulsions had taken place, nor had a split or a major defection occurred.⁹⁹

Revival is power: This is clearly seen in the increased and often sacrificial commitment of those revived. This is power the churches are coveting from their members. But revival is also counter power, since it has its own theology, its own organizational structures, its own spiritual energies, and last but not least, its own money.

Effective power to redeem

Social and political changes, worldwide and local, are bound to influence the church in Malawi. The last 50 years have often been described as the struggle between Communism and the West. Communism did not make it, finding last refuges in countries like Cuba and North Korea. But the last 50 years can also be understood as a worldwide struggle between a liberal approach to life and an authoritarian one, and then not all authoritarianism was in the East and all liberty in the West. Malawi, supposedly a bulwark of the West in its fight against Communism, was on the authoritarian side, but so were and are many structures in Western society, for example government owning "essential" services and industries (and more often than not mismanaging them) or creating and supporting monopolies and

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ *Since then a split off occurred, the Presbyterian Church of Malawi with its headquarters in Lilongwe.

reducing or prohibiting competition. Malawi shared to some extent in those things, too.

Not only in Malawi did the churches share in authoritarian structures. If Kamuzu argued for one Saviour,¹⁰⁰ one nation, one party, no dissidents,¹⁰¹ and obedience and discipline, this could be applied to the arguments of quite a number of churches. It's some time ago now that the church burnt witches and heretics at the stake, but often, even after that, churches fought tooth and nail to retain whatever power they had and to make life as difficult as possible for any dissident.¹⁰² Over the last decades the chances of the churches using the state as a tool in their quest for power have reduced themselves, but the attitudes behind this have not disappeared. The political and social change that swept through Malawi starting in 1992 also affected the churches, which in some ways had felt comfortable under an authoritarian government, because they themselves in some ways were one-party structures. If I judge the worldwide social development correctly, in Malawi the changes, dramatic though they were, have only begun. On the more obvious level it is the victory of democracy over totalitarian structures and over many socialist ideologies. On the individual level this means a tremendous increase in freedom to make decisions but also a tremendous increase in responsibility. The authorities that had made the decisions often just disappeared. There is no one any more to tell me not to wear bell bottom trousers, so I have to find out myself if they suit me and if they suit the people around me. To really accept this change takes time for society, more time than it took to gladly accept the demise of the old political regime.

Malawi's economy, and through it the whole population, was deeply steeped in a kind of authoritarian economy in which higher authorities decided which economic gains should profit whom. While the failure of the political system which organized the economy has become obvious (and believable) to most Malawians, few seem to have fully accepted the failure of the authoritarian economical system (which managed to keep the country among the poorest nations in spite of 30 years of peace, foreign assistance, a capitalist economy and development beyond recognition).

¹⁰⁰ Mainly from the stupid Federation.

¹⁰¹ Except as food for crocodiles.

¹⁰² MacAlpine alerted the colonial authorities in 1909 that Kamwana's activities should be stopped.

Few seem to have fully realized that it made the political clique rich,¹⁰³ that through it the rural poor subsidized the urban and wage earning population, and though it might have worked well for the profits of PRESS¹⁰⁴ it was altogether an economic system that would eat up most of the profits it generated. Though most have accepted that authoritarian politics are no longer viable (if they ever were), many have not yet accepted the same for the economy. Economic problems are to be solved by appeal to a benevolent state authority (subsidize fertilizer, control prices, organize transport¹⁰⁵ subsidize housing, subsidize David Whitehead¹⁰⁶ etc) or by identifying the donors; and competition is often still seen as creating unnecessary expense. If, on the one hand, the process of liberalization and individualization has started with politics and affected economics only to a limited extent, what about the church? In one way the answer is yes. In the churches people found much more liberty and individuality than the party felt would do them good. But on the other hand there is still a lot of authoritarian behaviour and thinking in the churches, both among the leadership and the members.

Liberalization and the churches

I expect the processes described above as liberalization and individualization to continue in Malawi. Especially in the economic sphere this will be difficult for many people to accept, but I expect that over a period of years many people will come to see the benefits. If this process continues, it will mean a loss of external power for many churches. Up to now, many decisions of the church leadership were accepted unquestioningly (though often not ungrudgingly), now more resistance is to be expected. Many more questions and challenges will come into the open than hitherto. I am

¹⁰³ As many conversations show me, participation in politics is seen as primarily a means to personal enrichment, and fast for that.

¹⁰⁴ The profitable conglomerate that controlled major sectors of Malawi's economy and was the property of Kamuzu Banda. Important sections of this economic empire were acquired from political dissidents (real or supposed) by means of the forfeiture act. An example is Press Bakeries.

¹⁰⁵ I am always amazed when I hear on the radio that the MP for so and so has asked the poor Minister of Transport to bring the Stagecoach buses to an important place in his constituency, as if that could be any of the minister's business.

¹⁰⁶ The only textile factory in Malawi, loss-making. *It was closed and later reopened privatized.

convinced that the churches should not regret this coming change. Or, if they regret it, they should accept it as unavoidable and prepare for it and as quickly as possible get rid of all scaffoldings of power to support their structures that are not germane to the gospel. A first and very important step would be to take a hard and long look at the sacramental structures of each church. How far do they mix authoritarian power with the power of the gospel which is a power of redemption, not of control? Another step for the churches would be to stop talking about the option for the poor, and instead take the poor seriously. For many churches this would require a change in the theology talked and acted of marriage, and for others a change in practice. Another suggestion is to make the financial dealings really transparent, another is to give women a proper share in leadership.

There is power in the gospel

The loss of authoritarian power must not mean a decline of the churches, since there is an alternative power, the power of the gospel. In changing circumstances emphasis should not be on the defence of (waning) privileges, but on spiritual power. This is the immediate possibility of any church, to seek spiritual power and to make it available to others. There will be a response: spiritual involvement, power of dedication, love and sacrifice. But this will not be achieved by defending waning authoritarian structures, but by challenging an increasingly independent and individualized church membership (and non members, too) with the claims and promises of the gospel. It was a power that withstood the pagan Roman Empire, it was a power that transformed individuals and societies, it was the power that sustained the witnesses and the martyrs. Therefore it should be a realistic power for Malawian churches today.

Competition

Things have changed in politics and are changing in economics. Competition is no longer a dirty word, but has been recognized as the key to effectiveness in both politics and economics. What about the church? I am convinced that churches must be as effective as business: Their business is to make eternal salvation and Christian living a reality for as many people as possible in as short a time as possible. Now, if business is made effective by competition and not by authoritarian regulation, why should it be different

with the church?¹⁰⁷ Malawi is fortunate in that there is already a lot of Christian competition. But I think that the churches should consciously accept this, not because it can hardly be avoided, but because it is a good thing. Christian competition will make salvation available to more people, will cut out dead wood from church structures, will increase the challenge to spiritual commitment. Isn't that what the church is for? Isn't that what the church wants?

Unity

There have been so many attempts up to now to seek Christian unity in the unity of organization. They have been futile, in spite of some limited results. The medicine does not work, and therefore I think it is best to follow the wisdom of a German *sing'anga* who once told me: "If a medicine does not work, I stop administering it." Organizational unity, in spite of contrary claims, was never a Christian virtue. It existed only where it was rigorously enforced by non-spiritual power. Organizational unity is surely nothing bad, but as soon as exclusive claims are attached to it, it becomes counter-productive and immoral. The unity of the church should not be sought in its structures, but in its aims. If the aim of the Church is to help as many people as possible to receive salvation and to live an effective Christian life of witness and service, then it does not matter if this happens in one church or in 25, and if more people receive the Christian life in 25 churches, then there is a unity in achievement.

Competition is not only a spiritual advantage as competition between churches, but also within churches. Many churches are virtual one party structures, organized from top down. If a member at any point in her or his life misses the right step, he or she is thrown out. Therefore it would be good if within the church there could be also competing structures, where for example leadership talent can be developed even if it is not for the training for the ministry or for election of elders. Para-church organizations, youth movements, independent women groups etc could do a very good job here. The churches should not fear these organizations and see their main job in controlling them, but rather support and advance them.

¹⁰⁷ "I share neither your rosy view of economic liberalization nor your thesis that free market economics is the model for healthy church life. But it is a voice of opposition to the liberal-ecumenical consensus—so it deserves to be heard." (Comment by Kenneth R. Ross, reading the draft of this chapter).

Competition and cooperation

Often in economics competition is seen by outsiders as an all out war. It is not. Competition and cooperation make for economic success. The same applies in the church and between the churches. Competition is not an all out war, it is the other side of cooperation. Both help to achieve effectiveness in Christian ministry and service, and keeping them together is what is needed.

My vision is a united church, organized in a multiplicity of diverse structures, peacefully and creatively competing and cooperating to do its best in the service of Christ, and challenging all its members and non members with the power of the gospel.

7 Power at the Receiving End: The Jehovah's Witnesses' Experience in One Party Malawi¹ (1996)

The Refusal to Constitute Power

When national independence came to Malawi in 1964, it meant a transfer of power: from colonial authority to national leadership, from a non political administration to a political government, constituted by the majority party in the national Parliament, which was elected by the people. Thus every Malawian could have a share in constituting power in the land, and as an independent nation Malawi would then rule itself for the benefit of all. That is what theory says so far. By the time of the Cabinet Crisis it became clear that freedom of choice meant to support freely what Kamuzu chose. Even before formal political independence it had been made clear that Congress Party demanded the allegiance of all Malawians.

In the Party's conflict with the Jehovah's Witnesses the issue at stake was not which party could win power, and if so, how to organize it, but the refusal to share in political power. The Congress Party expected everyone to support its power, and by doing so, constitute that power (and possibly share in it). The Jehovah's Witnesses did not struggle to achieve power, nor would they want a share in power. They refused to constitute power. In their turn, first the Party and then the government made it abundantly clear that every Malawian, babies included, had to do her or his part in constituting power. On the practical level the issue was: What kind of society is independent Malawi to construct for itself? Is it to be pluralistic or unitary? And if it is to be unitary, will there be room for individual deviation? The answer soon given was clear: Society must be politically unitary, and no deviation is allowed. The individual is of no value in itself; its value is to help in constituting the larger whole. But how that larger whole is to be, will not be decided by the contributing individuals, but by the leaders and owners of that larger whole, namely the party leadership and ultimately by their leader and owner, Kamuzu Banda.

¹ First published as: "Power at the Receiving End: The Jehovah's Witnesses' Experience in One-Party Malawi," in: Kenneth R. Ross (ed): *God, People and Power in Malawi: Democratization in Theological Perspective*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1996, pp. 149-176. Reprinted 1997. The article is based on students' research at the University of Malawi, Chancellor College. The students' original research notes (5 volumes) are now in the Mzuzu University Library Malawiana Section.

The message of the new power to the people of Malawi was freedom. Freedom from colonial rule and from the stupid Federation and its racism. Even in 1993, during his last public performances, Kamuzu would shout: "Ufulu!," to which the crowds had to respond enthusiastically: "Ufulu!" To put emphasis on the message, shout and response were repeated several times. So freedom was and remained high on the agenda of the Malawi Congress Party all the years it remained in power. The touchstone of political freedom is religious freedom. If one is allowed to live according to one's deepest religious convictions, this entails a lot of political freedom. The constitution of Malawi granted religious freedom, and Kamuzu proclaimed it again and again. In addition he prided himself in being a Christian, and not just nominally so, but with full involvement as a church elder. He also emphasized repeatedly that he had read the Bible from beginning to end. But in spite of all this, religious freedom in Malawi would, during his time, belong to the realm of the constitution, not to the realm of life, as the Jehovah's Witnesses were to experience.

The Jehovah's Witnesses

The Jehovah's Witnesses are an international religious organization, which was started in America by Charles Taze Russel in 1881 as the Zion's Watch Tower Tract Society. It formed an extreme wing of the broader pre-millennial movement, which had changed evangelical eschatology dramatically from about 1820 onwards. The missionary movement that was born in the Great Awakening and which changed the religious map of Africa so drastically in the 19th century, was "postmillennial." The term means that they expected the second coming of Christ to take place after the millennium, during which the church would "reign gloriously" for a thousand years. The millennium would be brought about by divine intervention at the end of a process of missions and social reforms gradually encompassing the whole world, and thus making it a better place to live in. The Premillennialists did not expect the world to improve with time, but rather to deteriorate. Then, and probably quite soon, Christ would return to usher in the millennium and rule it as its visible king. This general premillennial conviction had come to be shared by 1870 by almost all the newer Protestant missions as well as by many missionaries who, before, had held postmillennial views. While most evangelical Christians were convinced that the return of Christ was "near" or "imminent," some groups started to calculate the date of that event by using ingenious combinations

of apocalyptic and historical time reckoning.² One group to do so were the Millerites who fixed the date as 1844,³ another group to do so were the Jehovah's Witnesses, who chose 1914.⁴

Right from the beginning it was not Russel's aim to start a new denomination, but a new movement, a movement of Bible students who prepare for the end soon to come. Christ did not return to earth in 1914, Russel died in 1916, somewhat bewildered, but the organization he had started lived on, consolidated and spread. No precise date for Christ's return was ever set again, though the date of the beginning of his invisible presence was moved to 1914. The event of 1914 was now seen as a heavenly event, marking the beginning of the final stage in world history, which would not take longer than one generation.⁵ The Watchtower Movement then developed from a somewhat loosely structured organization into a tightly structured religious group, centrally directed from headquarters in Brooklyn, New York. The Jehovah's Witnesses do not see themselves as one church among so many others, and they do not even accept that they are a church. They see themselves as the Theocratic Organization, whose members will be saved in the final battle of Armageddon. They have no fellowship with Christian churches.

² The apocalyptic time reckoning was taken from Daniel and Revelation. These two books were combined, and then certain apocalyptic events, dates and personalities were identified with historical events, dates and personalities. The false prophet was, at times, identified with Muhammad, the antichrist was identified either as a certain pope or as the papal system etc. Based on these identifications and on a certain concept of prophetic language, so that a week in the book of Daniel would be taken to mean seven years ("a week of years"), timetables of past and future events could be developed. The first modern European theologian to fix the date of Christ's coming was the German Pietist leader Johann Albrecht Bengel (1687-1752), who fixed the date of Christ's second coming as 18 June 1836.

³ On William Miller's life, evangelism and teaching see R.W. Schwarz, *Light Bearers to the Remnant*, Mountain View/Oshawa: Pacific Press, 1979, pp. 31-57.

⁴ This calculation was based on N.H. Barbour's assumption that Christ had been present invisibly since 1874, and that he would usher in the millennium after a period of testing of 40 years.

⁵ This concept is based on Matthew 24.34 which says: "I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until these things have happened" (NIV).

The Jehovah's Witnesses in Malawi

The Jehovah's Witnesses (then Watchtower Society) originally came to Malawi in 1908 through the preaching of Elliot Kamwana.⁶ The link to Russel in America was Joseph Booth in Cape Town, who, before and after his allegiance to the Watchtower Society was a Seventh Day Baptist. Booth had visited Russel in 1906 in the USA,⁷ returned to Cape Town as a Watch Tower representative, trained Elliot Kamwana there as a Watchtower missionary and sent him back to his native Malawi, where he had great success among the Tonga, baptizing about 9,000 people within three months.⁸ Kamwana preached the coming of the millennium for 1914, and seems to have added to the general Watchtower message about the millennium some anti-colonial touches. On the suggestion of Livingstonia missionary MacAlpine the government deported him to Southern Malawi.⁹ Later he was deported to Chinde and finally to Mauritius. In spite of his absence the congregations he had started continued, and attempts by Joseph Booth to make them Seventh Day Baptist failed.¹⁰

In 1934 the international Watchtower Society, now under the name of Jehovah's Witnesses, sent a representative to check on the state of affairs in the Watchtower movement in Malawi. He declared almost all Watchtower members to be heretical, accepting only 30 as genuine. Starting with this small group the international Jehovah's Witnesses built up their organization in Malawi, until at the time of independence it had about 17,000 members. The expelled Watchtower adherents continued as Watchtower Mission (Native Controlled). When Kamwana finally was allowed to return in 1937, his branch became the Watchman Healing Mission. For this chapter it is important to keep in mind, that, though the two movements have a common root, they do not recognize each other, and in the following text the name Jehovah's Witnesses only applies to those who belong to the international organization under that name.

⁶ See J.C. Chakanza, "From Preacher to Prophet: Elliot Kenan Kamwana and the Watch Tower Movement in Malawi, 1908-1956," in: J.C. Chakanza, *Preachers in Protest*, forthcoming in the Kachere Series (Blantyre: CLAIM).

⁷ Harry Langworthy, *"Africa for the African": The Life of Joseph Booth*, Blantyre: CLAIM, 1996, pp. 195-196.

⁸ Ibid, pp. 195ff.

⁹ Ibid, p. 219.

¹⁰ Ibid, chapters 13 and 14.

The Jehovah's Witnesses are represented in most countries of the world, counting presently more than 7 million members worldwide, most of them in Africa.¹¹ Their organization is strictly centralized. Therefore their Bible studies, magazines and books are the same everywhere, being translated usually from English, and displaying a style strongly reminiscent of some religious subculture in America.¹²

Now we can speak

While working for the Theology of Life Project, we felt that a record should be made of those who suffered through the exercise of power and because of the denial of religious freedom. So during the Easter vacation 1995 students were encouraged to record the experience of Jehovah's Witnesses, usually in the students' home areas. I had been aware that the Jehovah's Witnesses had been banned in the country, and that many had fled to neighbouring countries, but I was shocked by the horrible details which these stories, randomly collected, contained. There was no record of it, yet, but a record there should be, for the sake of truth, to remember those who died being denied religious freedom, to make clear what national unity meant for those on the receiving end. Let those speak who still can because they survived.

In the Theology of Life Project it was my task to pay special attention to the "smaller" churches. Though the Jehovah's Witnesses would refuse to be called a church, they somehow belonged to my remit. Having lived in Malawi less than four years then, I did not witness any of the physical persecution, and as someone who did not live through this period himself, I must be careful not to be judgmental. I can only surmise what I would have done, thought and felt in those days. I must also be careful, not to forget that as a German I come from a nation with one of the worst human rights records, which did not only cause the most horrible war in world history, but also killed six million people for no other crime than being Jews, not counting hundreds of thousands of other people like Sinti and Roma ("gypsies"), the mentally ill, the politically dissident and thousands of Jehovah's Witnesses.

¹¹ *In 2013 the Jehovah's Witnesses counted 7.690.000 "publishers" (actively involved in preaching), with over 19 Million at the annual memorial celebration, which may represent the total Jehovah's Witnesses community (wiki: Jehovah's Witnesses)

¹² *For a study of the life of a Jehovah's Witnesses congregation, see =. This is the first BA dissertation on the Jehovah's Witnesses by a Witness himself.

I am not guilty of those crimes, simply because I was not around then, being only three years old when Germany was liberated by the Allied Forces, and I do not believe in collective guilt. But I feel shame, and I do believe in collective shame. After 1945 the German nation decided to face its horrible past, and not to attempt a new start by forgetting both victims and perpetrators. I am convinced that Malawi neither should start a new era by "forgiving and forgetting," but should rather face its—far less horrible—past, remember it, relive it to some extent, face the truth and thus seek healing, forgiveness and a new start. I wish that this chapter, written by one who shares the collective shame of his own nation, may help to heal.

One nation, one party, buy your card!

Worldwide the Jehovah's Witnesses have some convictions which a state can easily take objection to: in their first decades they saw the state as such as evil, but receiving newer light the Jehovah's Witnesses leadership ("the wise and faithful slave")¹³ changed the teaching on the state so that it is now seen, according to Romans 13, as not bad in itself. On the one hand, even before this change in teaching, Jehovah's Witnesses were law abiding citizens, but the change of teaching removed any doubts about the propriety of paying taxes, sending children to school etc. On the other hand, Jehovah's Witnesses continue to refuse military service, and they refuse to take any part in politics. Since they always paid their taxes, and since military service was voluntary, the major area of conflict in Malawi was politics, and the nationwide symbol of political involvement was the "party card," signifying membership in the Malawi Congress Party.

Persecution started in 1963 in the run up to the elections that led to independence. At one place the Kingdom Hall was burnt three months before the election. Jehovah's Witnesses fled to Mozambique to a village close to Chiromo, and children were barred from attending primary school because they did not have a party card.¹⁴

Mr Simoni and other Jehovah's Witnesses were beaten very severely. His property was destroyed, his house was set on fire. All maize seedlings in his field were uprooted by the Youths.¹⁵

¹³ Based on Mt 24:45-47.

¹⁴ Int Faison S. Chimphepo 14 April 1995 [Ashanie Gawa].

¹⁵ Int Macdonald Simoni 14 April 1995 [Charles Eliyasi].

These persecutions were too organized and too widespread to be seen as public outbursts against those who did not help in the struggle, and they took place while the Jehovah's Witnesses were perfectly legal. What was done were criminal acts according to the laws of Malawi, but no report of legal prosecution of the criminals has come to light.¹⁶ It seems that even at that early stage in the history of free Malawi the judicial system was less than free.

Peaks and Valleys of Persecution: 1964, 1967, 1972

After the elections of 1964 the persecution decreased somewhat.¹⁷ Some report that they could pray freely and without interference.¹⁸ Refugees were encouraged to return, "since everything was over,"¹⁹ but they were still pressurized to buy the card.²⁰

Mzuzu 1967

The Mzuzu 1967 Malawi Congress Party Convention brought the first major peak in the persecution. The convention made a resolution, which the Ngwazi heartily endorsed in his closing remarks:

I recommend strongly that the Jehovah's Witnesses denomination be declared illegal in this country as the attitude of its adherents is not only inimical to the progress of this country, but also negative in

¹⁶ Since several houses were set alight with the people in them (Int Jevis and Chrissie Kapanda 15 April 1995 [Rosemary T. Muhuwo]), criminal charges might even have included murder and attempted murder.

¹⁷ In the material collected there is no case of severe persecution reported for 1965 or 1966.

¹⁸ Int Cecelia Mazibuko 21 April 1995 [Munthali].

¹⁹ "In 1965 all the Malawian Jehovah's Witnesses who went or fled to Mozambique were forced to go back home. The Malawian government and the MCP assured them that everything was over but that was not the truth. After returning to Malawi, they were subjected to similar problems as before and they were still forced to buy party membership cards" (Int Langton W. Mukhwapa 1 May 1995 [Charles Eliyasi]).

²⁰ "Despite this freedom granted to them while in Mozambique Mr Simoni and his family were not comfortable in Mozambique because it was foreign land. Such being the case he came back to Malawi together with the other Jehovah's Witnesses in 1966. They were not welcomed in Malawi. Even chiefs did not like them except for some few close relatives. They were still forced to buy MCP membership cards" (Int Macdonald Simoni 14 April 1995 [Charles Eliyasi]).

every way that it endangers the stability and peace and calm which is essential for the smooth running of our state.²¹

Kamuzu mentioned that Government "may pass a law in such way that every area, district can decide itself whether it wants Jehovah's Witnesses or not. If people in any area say 'No' then there would be no Jehovah's Witnesses there." Such a law was indeed made by government in October, but it banned the Jehovah's Witnesses outright, leaving the people of given areas no choice, and threatened to punish anyone trying to keep the movement going with 14 years in jail.²²

Long before these legal niceties had been completed, the MCP had taken the law in its own hands and launched a ferocious onslaught on the Jehovah's Witnesses. In this onslaught the youth wing of the party, and in some areas the Malawi Young Pioneers, were prominent, acting obviously under the direction of higher party officials. At Gowoka, the area chairman told the youth leaguers to hunt down all Jehovah's Witnesses. One was Mr Phiri. The Youths surrounded his house at night, ordered Mr Phiri out, then entered the house and threw his sleeping wife out and started to beat both of them. Their books were torn to pieces and scattered on the way. Then they pushed them to walk, while singing a mocking song:

Mwawamboni kutenthenena muleke!	Witnesses, don't be afraid!
Mwafwa mwafwira chiuta winu.	If you die, you die for your God.
Iyi ninkhondo mwayiona.	This is war as you see.
Mwa wa youth kuthenthenena muleke!	You Youth, don't be afraid!
Mwafwa mwafwira chalu chinu.	If you die, it is for your country
Iyi ndi nkhondo mwayiona. ²³	This is war as you see.

After arriving at a school, both were undressed (except underwear). They had to run around the school blocs so that the Youth Leaguers, encircling the bloc, could beat them. Soon others were brought in and were subjected to similar treatment. Torture of women was discontinued in the morning, for men it continued till midday, with sticks with sharpened metal pieces being used in the exercise. Some were left for dead, but they had only fainted. None could be taken to hospital, because the Jehovah's Witnesses were not allowed to use "Kamuzu's hospitals." But still they would not buy party cards.

²¹ Printed in Malawi News 19 September 1967. "On Jehovah's Witnesses the President said that they were causing trouble everywhere."

²² *The Times*, 23 October 1967.

²³ Int Syton E. F. Mumba for Amosi Phiri 20 April 1995 [Munthali].

Major methods of persecution were the burning of houses (preferably with the inhabitants inside), the slashing of crops in the fields, general beatings and more exquisite forms of torture. Sometimes this killed, but sometimes murder was consciously included.

He and other Jehovah's Witnesses were beaten severely by the MYP and Youth Leaguers for refusing the membership cards. His relative [...] was killed on the spot for the same reason. He was cut into pieces as a demonstration to others to scare them but they were not.²⁴

Persecution brought benefits to the persecutors: they would serve their country, experience the pleasures of power, and could distribute the movable property of the persecuted among themselves. In such a situation, even the corrugated iron sheets of a roof were easily removed.²⁵ The land they had been cultivating, though not movable, could still benefit others. Part of it was taken by the persecutors, part of it was allotted to relatives. In spite of this severe persecution, most Jehovah's Witnesses continued to refuse to buy party cards, and they would meet at night in private houses in smaller groups or even in the bush. Despite many Witnesses fleeing to neighbouring countries, their numbers did not decrease, as their faith continued to be attractive. In 1968 there was, just as in 1965, a certain relenting of the persecution.²⁶ Not that it stopped, but it was less severe. In the cities persecution took place,²⁷ too, but was generally less severe than in the countryside. In Chithawira (Blantyre) they were able to meet openly and in 1969/70 even to build a major Kingdom Hall.²⁸

Zomba 1972

The renewed persecution was launched with new and much stronger resolutions passed by the convention, with Kamuzu again, and this time even more clearly, endorsing them.

²⁴ Int Samson Gresham 12 April 1995 [Charles Eliyasi].

²⁵ Int Stewart Kumbanyiwa 2 May 1995 [Charles Eliyasi].

²⁶ Int Cecelia Mazibuko 21 April 1995 [Munthali].

²⁷ After the publication of the ban in the Gazette, eight expatriate Witnesses were deported ("Banned Sect Heads to Go. Four Remanded," *Malawi News* 10 November 1967).

²⁸ This was built with money from well-wishers in USA and UK, and with money and labour of the local members, close to Chitawira Primary School. Before they had been meeting sometimes in the grounds of the school (Int NN, 9 April 1995 [Aloisious Nthenda]).

"Zitakambirana mwatsatane-tsatane pa zobvuta zimene ziletsa chitukuko cha Chipani ndi cha dziko, nthumwi

a) Zidakhumudwa poona kuti anthu ena a liuma a zipembedzo zobvuta, zooneka ngati mpingo woletsedwa wa Mboni za Yehova, akanitsitsa chitukuko cha ndale ndi chuma mdizko lino.

b) Zidagwizana kuti mamembala onse a mpingo ya anthu obvuta chotere amene ali pa ntchito m'kampani achotsedwe ntchito lero-lero, ndipo ngati kampani iriyonse siitsata zimene talembe pa mfundo ino, kampani imeneyo ilandidwe laisensi.

c) Zidapangana kuti mamembala onse a mpingo yobvuta chotere amene adalembedwa ntchito ndi Boma achotsedwe ntchito msanga-msanga, ndiponso kuti aliyense wa mpingo yotere amene ali ndi ntchito yake-yake, ngakhale ndi ya bizinesi yakeyo kapena ya ulimi, bizinesi yakeyo kapena minda wakewo ulandidwa.

d) Zidapangana kuti onse a mpingo yotere amene akhala ku midzi apiriki-tsidwe kumidziko, ndipo zidapempha Boma kuti lisabvute anthu a Chipani amene azilimbana ndi anthu a mpingo yotere."

Having discussed in great detail the problems that confront the Progress of the Party and the Nation, delegates

a) Deplored the fact that certain fanatical religious sects which operated like the banned Jehovah's Witness sect, hindered the political and economic development of the country.

b) Resolved that all the members of those fanatical religious sects employed in Commerce and Industry should be dismissed forthwith, and that any commercial or industrial concern that does not comply with these resolutions should have its license cancelled.

c) Resolved that all the members of those fanatical religious sects employed by the Government should be dismissed forthwith and that any member of these sects who is self-employed either in business or farming should have his business or farming interests discouraged.

d) Resolved that all members of those sects who live in the villages should be chased away from there, and appealed to government to give maximum possible protection to members of the party who deal with the adherents of these sects.

The English version of paragraph c. is [intentionally?] vague: "should have his business or farming interests discouraged." The Chewa version clearly states: "bizinesi yakeyo kapena munda wakewo ulandidwe." This must be translated: "His/her business or field must be taken away (by force)."

The last clause in resolution (d) shows that those who drafted it must have been aware that what they were intending was illegal, even in Malawi. The persecution of the "banned sect" was not to be done by the appropriate authorities like police and judiciary, but by the party. Therefore they would need legal protection for their illegal actions. But do you need legal protection for illegal acts if they are done on behalf of Kamuzu? No, as it became clear immediately.¹

At the end of the convention, Kamuzu made it clear that nobody "dealing" with the Jehovah's Witnesses had anything to fear. He endorsed the resolutions wholeheartedly, as recalled by one Jehovah's Witness:

Kamuzu consented to the idea of torture and persecution of the Jehovah's Witnesses. Kamuzu's part of the speech was like this, "The Jehovah's Witnesses claim to know God's Word, but I read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation and if at all there is somebody to enter heaven, then it's me. They refuse to buy party cards, but when in trouble they rush to police, whose police? Therefore I order them to prepare a ladder that will lead them to heaven, but it shouldn't be placed on the country's land because my ants shall devour them." Since his word was like an established law, persecution started on the very same day, 18th Sept.²

Malawi News also reported that Kamuzu made it abundantly clear how he rated the Jehovah's Witnesses: "They are the Satan's or the Devil's Witnesses." He also made clear that there was no difference between party and government:

When they are in trouble, they complain to the police, the DC or the Chief. These are government. These are government, but they refuse

¹ At the same conference Kamuzu emphasized the importance of good behaviour: See caption page 5, *Malawi News*, 22.9.1972: "Commenting on the resolution, the Life President emphasized the importance of good manners in keeping with our tradition."

² Int Mr M. Kaleso 16 April 1995 [Hanna A. Bonzo].

to pay taxes to the government.³ Why do they not go to the church and ask for help from God when in trouble.⁴

At a mass rally at Zaone, just after the close of the Zomba convention, he made it very clear: "They are stupid."⁵ On the same day as Kamuzu gave his endorsement, a new wave of persecution started, more widespread and more terrible than the preceding ones. At the same time he emphasized good behaviour.⁶

William Clark, the leader of the Jehovah's Witnesses in the whole country, living in Chigumula, Blantyre, was given 24 hours to leave the country. When he left in the morning of 19th Sept. 1972, there came a multitude of MCP members to steal and share all his property.⁷ His workers were commanded to leave. Failing to do so, they would be burnt.⁸

Expatriates were usually treated more generously. Malawians had no other home than Malawi. All civil servants were dismissed from their jobs, and even private employers were forced to dismiss their workers who were Witnesses. In Blantyre, again, the situation seems to have been a bit easier. A Jehovah's Witness, owning a barber's shop in Ndirande, had his shop demolished by "unknown persons" in September, but no harm was done to him, and on 5 October the local MCP chairman came to his house and gave him 12 hours to leave "since Kamuzu had directed that they should vacate the country."⁹

In rural areas less subtle ways of persuading the remaining Jehovah's Witnesses to "vacate" the country were applied. The Mazibuko family had

³ I have no evidence whatsoever that Jehovah's Witnesses refused to pay taxes. Obviously Kamuzu, ignoring the subtle differences between party and state, understood the party card to be a tax.

⁴ Malawi News, 19 September 1972 [Tuesday].

⁵ Malawi News, 22 September 1972 [Friday].

⁶ Mfundo za ku Msonkhano Waukulu wa Chipani (*Malawi News* Sunday 10.9.-Saturday 16.9.1972).— At the same conference Kamuzu emphasized the importance of good behaviour: See caption page 5. *Malawi News*, Friday 22.9.1972. "Commenting on the resolution, the Life President emphasized the importance of good manners in keeping with our tradition."

⁷ The crowd showed a very similar behaviour the morning after the army had dislodged the MYP from their Zomba base. The actual armed attack produced little damage compared to the looting afterwards.

⁸ Int Michael Kovuluva 15 April 1995 [Hanna Bonzo].

⁹ Int Mr C.J. Nekonda 10 April 1995 [R.M. Soko].

their maize store burnt, the father was taken to the chief where he was beaten to the point of death.¹⁰ On 25 September members of the MYP came to Mr Mkandawire's village. They were told to come out of their houses, and neighbours were leaders in this act. Properties were taken away from them and those which were of no value to them were burnt to ashes. At midday of 25th Sept. Mr Qabaniso Chibambo, who was by then MCP minister in the Northern region, called all the Jehovah's Witness members for a meeting. He said that the government had decided that they must buy MCP cards and must join the party. If not they must be killed or chased away immediately. He gave them two days to think. However, they were not left alone since the Youths and Pioneers were there forcing them to buy the MCP cards by beating them, young and old, male and female. While they were at the meeting, their houses were burnt to ashes.¹¹

Mr Mkandawire's grandfather, Mr Mhango, who had two shops, seeing that his house was burning to ashes, managed to run from the group and hid his two sewing machines in the bush, but unfortunately he was seen by the MYP and as a result was beaten to death. They were left without any property and were forced to stay in the bush since their houses were burnt. They were not regarded as human beings but animals, for example they were not allowed to visit hospitals, buy food at the markets, cross bridges, go to the maize mill. They lived in the bush for 3 weeks and they survived by eating potatoes which they used to harvest at night in their gardens which no longer belonged to them since they had been taken away from them.¹²

The 1972 persecution surpassed in cruelty and scope the persecution of 1967. Most Jehovah's Witnesses seem to have left Malawi then. Some managed to remain by giving up their faith or by somehow compromising it, others remained without doing either.

Dzaleka 1975

After the 1972 peak the persecution did not relent much. In 1975 a change occurred in that now the judicial system became officially involved. This was in some ways a hardening of the persecution. But the advantage was that now the pattern became regular: Jehovah's Witnesses would be brought to court at Dowa to be accused of treason and plotting to

¹⁰ Int Cecelia Mazibuko 21 April 1995 [Munthali].

¹¹ Int Aaron Mkandawire [Mirriam Chipeta Banda].

¹² Int Aaron Mkandawire [Mirriam Chipeta Banda].

overthrow the MCP government. The judge was always Muhango, who would always find them guilty and sentence them to two years imprisonment with hard labour. The prison to spend these two years was always Dzaleka, where in the "Jehovah's Witnesses section" up to 3000 were housed. Dzaleka was no holiday resort, and cruelties not included in the term "hard labour" could also not be excluded, either.

At Dzaleka ... they were given hoes and were told to level down a hill which was nearby. They were forced to work all day long whether under intense sunlight or rainfall. They were not allowed to rest and were constantly being beaten at the back while working. Many people were dying, in a week six to ten people could die. They were working from 6:00 am to 7:00 pm. They ate at 12 midnight without washing hands. They could stay for two or three months without taking a shower.¹³

In the camp it happened that elders who taught anything resembling Jehovah's Witnesses teaching were given additional punishment, and any Jehovah's Witness, who was caught reading one of the prison Bibles, would have to stay on two extra months. But Dzaleka, hard as it was (and not everyone survived), had the advantage that the time was clearly regulated. After two years you would be given a warrant to travel home, and there the party was not to trouble you unduly.¹⁴ The Jehovah's Witnesses could not meet openly, but they were normally not to be persecuted when they met unofficially, first usually in the bush, later also in private houses. In addition somewhere during this time (1975-1977) prison conditions improved, and all children (up to 18 years) were released unconditionally. Various accounts report that the then Inspector General of the Police, Kamwana, made these arrangements.¹⁵

The relenting of the persecution (1978)

The year 1978 was marked by a considerable change in the experience of the Jehovah's Witnesses. They remained as illegal as before, they could not meet openly, land taken away was not returned, and they could expect various forms of harassment at any time. The Youth League continued to be active, but the level of harassment changed. Children could attend school

¹³ Int Michael H. Nambara 11 April 1995 [Charles Eliyasi].

¹⁴ Int Jenifa Moyo 18 April 1995 [Munthali].

¹⁵ He also visited the camp to hear prisoners' grievances. He arranged for example that mothers with small children were given three blankets (Int Mrs Nekonda 11 April 1995 [R.M. Soko]).

again, and when in 1986 six were dropped for not having a party card, the police immediately reinstated them.¹⁶ Forced selling of party cards was still an active pursuit, but instead of beating, stealing, raping and killing, they would arrange for a forced exchange: When party cards were due for renewal, they would come and take by force (which Jehovah's Witnesses would not resist) what they considered the equivalent in value, be it chicken, chair or other movable property.¹⁷ This "muted" persecution continued until the referendum brought the defeat of the one-party system. In September 1993 Parliament rescinded all restrictions on the Jehovah's Witnesses. In the spirit of forgetting instead of forgiving no effort was made to address the injustices done.

Lands of Refuge

One advantage for troubled Malawians is that the country is small and that a border is never very far away. This was a way for many of the Witnesses to save their lives, and for the government a convenient way to get rid of the undesirables.

Mozambique

Due to its geographical proximity, in many areas Mozambique was the land to flee to. The borders were not really controlled, sometimes not even clearly defined. But even where a river like the Ruo marked the border, crossing it was rarely difficult for people who knew the area. In the wake of the 1963/64 persecution, refuge in Mozambique was more an individual issue. Numbers were limited, and those who sought refuge often knew their way around the area. In the wake of the 1967 persecution, numbers were higher, but they were highest in the wake of the 1972 persecution. The main area of refuge in Mozambique was Milanje, just across from Mulanje in Malawi. "The people of Mozambique were amazed with such unruly and unbecoming actions and as a result welcomed them."¹⁸ But it was not easy to help all when, like on 9 October 1972, 1,000 people arrived in one go.¹⁹ As soon as it was administratively possible, the Mozambican

¹⁶ Int John Henry Mwase [Esnat Mdolo].

¹⁷ Int Lydia Shawa 19 April 1995 [Munthali].

¹⁸ Int Mr R. Nivalo 19 April 1995 [Hanna Bonzo].

¹⁹ Int Michael Kovuluwa 14 April 1995 [Hanna Bonzo].

government, then still under Portuguese rule, began to assist.²⁰ The Jehovah's Witnesses were given refugee status, and the United Nations assumed responsibility.²¹ The refugees were housed in large camps, where they would be able to receive assistance and then gradually establish their own agriculture. There in the camp they had full religious freedom, they would build their Kingdom Halls and witness to their faith. They were free to move, and a number of them even made their permanent homes in Mozambique.

Colonial freedom, though, came to an end with the coming of political independence to Mozambique. Instead of the MCP it was now Frelimo which demanded signs of allegiance, like shouting "Viva Frelimo" or "Viva Samora Machel." The Malawi Government seems to have taken advantage of the change of government in Mozambique and therefore seems to have arranged for forced repatriation.²² The Witnesses, anyhow, were told by the Mozambiquan government that "they had been called by their Kamuzu." But when they came, there was no friendly welcome: "Mwatipezanso" (you have found us again) and party cards as usual. Forced repatriation and Frelimo demands were not the only problems. War made things worse. Renamo was not keen to elicit a show of support for national symbols from the refugees, but they wanted them as carriers in the war, and that was not welcome to the Jehovah's Witnesses who were conscientious objectors. In addition Renamo was renowned for its random cruelty. The war, then, forced many refugees back into Malawi, and the international Jehovah's Witnesses' authorities even seem to have advised a return in 1977. Some were clever: They fled to Malawi as Mozambiquan refugees. As such they were received well, and in the camps supervised by the UN, there was full religious freedom.²³

Zambia: Nsindamisale

In 1972 the biggest exodus went into Zambia, where they were received into a camp at Nsindamisale. By November about 21,000 people had

²⁰ Special mention is made of the DC of Vira District (Int Mr L. Mkwayira 22 April 1995 [Hanna Bonzo]).

²¹ The refugees numbered about 19,000 (Int Mr M. Kaleso 16 April 1995 [Hanna Bonzo]).

²² It is not fully clear which government was the driving force in the repatriation.

²³ Some Malawians even took advantage of this from their side, going into the camps for their prayers (Int Mapulani Alufeyo 16 April 1995 [Ashanie Gawa]).

reached the camp.²⁴ Nsindamisale was a place of refuge, but also of death. The camp was ill equipped, the number of people was too large, and the sanitary conditions terrible. Hundreds died of waterborne diseases, ascribed by some even to the MCP poisoning the sources of water:

After a week of their stay in Zambia [according to the source this was six weeks after the persecution started at the convention], Malawi sent spies who managed to survey their source of water and poisoned the water. As a result of drinking poisoned water, many of the brothers and sisters died and they buried them in mass graves without coffins.²⁵

The illness probably was cholera, but can one blame refugees who had gone through so many atrocities for putting the blame on the MCP just once more?²⁶

Zambia, though, did not like to keep the refugees, in spite of its UN responsibility to do so. It negotiated with the government of Malawi a forced repatriation. In mid December the refugees were put into buses and lorries and driven back to Lilongwe Old Airport, where they were welcomed by Mr Kumbweza, the Regional Minister of the MCP for the Centre. The welcome was most unwelcoming. They were requested to shout "Kwacha" (which they refused), were searched for weapons (how should they have got them?), and Kumbweza told them:

Munapita nokha mwabwerakonso nokha, kodi mudzatsata zofuna za chipani? [You went on your own, and you have come back on your own, will you now do what the party wants?]

Some were made to feel the welcome physically. They were searched for guns while naked,²⁷ their books were confiscated, some were beaten up,²⁸ a number of elders were sent to Maula Prison.²⁹ Those who did not live too far from Lilongwe were told to go home and behave themselves, the rest were transported in the direction of home on army lorries. Those going

²⁴ *The Times* (London) 19 December 1972, referred to an anonymous paper, written possibly 1993: "The Watchtower Movement in Malawi: Its Origin, Development and Persecution (1908-1993).

²⁵ Int Aaron Mkandawire April 1995 [Mirriam C. Banda].

²⁶ *The Times* (London) 19 December 1972 reported that 342 had died so far.

²⁷ "Ndipo anthu a akazi ankawasecha kumaliseche ali abisako mfuti choncho nkavulidwa kuti aone ngati sali ndi mfuti" (Int Chief Josamu Kwendanjati 14 April 1995 [Rosemary T. Muhuwo].

²⁸ Int Alabia Barnard 18 April 1995 [Rosemary T. Muhuwo].

²⁹ Int Alabia Barnard 18 April 1995 [Rosemary T. Muhuwo].

north were all dropped at Pyukuru (Mzimba) on command of the minister of the Northern Region, Mr Chibambo. They were told to respond to the "Kwacha" slogan, but nobody responded,³⁰ and they were threatened with massive shooting.³¹ Pyukuru Hill then was a lonely place, with lots of lions. They were given no provisions, but local people helped them on their way.

Return to new persecution

The general pattern after this forced return was new persecution. When going to find some sweet potatoes in what once used to be their gardens, the Youth might hide and frighten or torture them.³² Nothing was given back to them. On Christmas Day 1972, for example, the MP for the Makhanga area commanded that the Jehovah's Witnesses assemble at Makhanga School where they whipped them severely and asked them why they ran away to Zambia on their own choice and returned again.³³ Many returnees, realizing that they had been cheated and that nothing good was in store for them, immediately or very soon after fled again, this time mostly to Mozambique via Mlangeni.³⁴ But some fled back to Zambia, where they were allowed to stay, too.³⁵

International power

The Jehovah's Witnesses suffered for their refusal to create national power and thereafter from the excessive and illegal use of this national power. This national power was legally sheltered by the concept of national sovereignty and the concomitant concept of non-interference in national affairs.³⁶ This meant that international power did not bring much relief to the suffering Jehovah's Witnesses, and possibly it increased it. The fact that there were competing national powers around Malawi made it possible for the Witnesses to find refuge. An exception here is Tanzania, where the

³⁰ Int Mr Nyasa Moyo 12 April 1995 [Ashanie Gawa].

³¹ Int Syton E.F. Mumba 17 April 1995 [Munthali].

³² Int Mr Nyasa Moyo 12 April 1995 [Ashanie Gawa].

³³ Int Mr Nyasa Moyo 12 April 1995 [Ashanie Gawa]. In 1973 things were quiet.

³⁴ "They were forced to leave on that day and they went to Mozambique where they camped at Mlangeni. They were protected by the police on their way to Mozambique (Int Chief Josamu Kwendanjati 14 April 1995 [Rosemary T. Muhuwo]).

³⁵ Int Peter, Matthew and Phodo 14 April 1995 [Rosemary T. Muhuwo].

³⁶ Cf Klaus Fiedler, "National Sovereignty. An Outdated Concept?," Faith and Knowledge Seminar No. 43, Chancellor College, 29 February 1996.

Jehovah's Witnesses were banned, too.³⁷ If countries like Mozambique and Zambia offered refuge indeed, thus helping the persecuted, they also helped the persecutors by providing a place to which the Jehovah's Witnesses could be expelled to. The concept of national sovereignty made it possible to "solve the Jehovah's Witnesses problem" in Malawi by dumping the unwanted members of the nation elsewhere. That was much cheaper than to put them all in Malawian prisons and much easier than to kill them all.³⁸ The concept of national sovereignty made it also possible, after changes in government, to negotiate forced repatriation schemes.

It is important to note that the powerful nations of the West, so strong in their allegiance to democracy and freedom, found the extreme denial of both democracy and freedom in Malawi not to be a big issue. In writing this chapter I had very little access to international sources, but it seems that at least the British Government made some verbal representations to the Malawian government through its ambassador. But little power seems to have been attached to these representations, because Britain (and the other Western powers) continued to support Banda and often even to praise his able leadership, wisdom etc. The Western powers, as protagonists of the fight for freedom and democracy, supported (not by their few words, but by their actions) the suppression of the Jehovah's Witnesses' religious freedom (and of other freedoms) in Malawi because they had located the enemy of freedom (rightly) in worldwide Communism, and then (wrongly) concluded that any enemy of the Soviet Union must be treated as an ally in the West's fight for freedom, so that freedom in that country would not matter much.

Some relief through international power came to the victims of persecution through the UN, which cared well for the refugees and granted them the religious freedom they treasured so highly. Though the political powers in the West took little notice, international organizations fighting for human rights did well in documenting many of the atrocities. But the

³⁷ I lived at that time in Songea in the Ruvuma Region. I never heard of any active persecution. The only Jehovah's Witness I personally knew was a carpenter, frequently working for us. He made no secret of his religious adherence, had access to Jehovah's Witnesses' literature, and in his village not far from Songea he had build a nice little Kingdom Hall. There was nothing secret about it, only that he did not put up a sign post "Jehovah's Witnesses Kingdom Hall."

³⁸ Other nations like Germany in the Jewish Holocaust, Turkey in the Armenian Massacres (1915) and Kampuchea (under the Khmer Rouge) used that "solution," with a combined total of about 10 Million murdered.

influence of these organizations was limited, and since the Jehovah's Witnesses had no high profile cases of human rights abuse, the international human rights organizations concentrated their efforts on cases like those of Vera and Orton Chirwa and that of Jack Mapanje. The international churches seem to have been hampered also by the concept of national (church) sovereignty. The Church of Scotland was committed to the policy of the independence of the national church, which meant that it would act only on request of the local leadership. But the national churches never requested the use of international power to help those who suffered. Things only changed when, with the demise of Communism, concepts of national sovereignty limited by human rights developed, so that international power could help to bring about a change to democracy in Malawi and thereby also to restore to the Jehovah's Witnesses the religious freedom that had been their human right all along.

The Character of the Persecution

Since persecutions differ from case to case, it may be good to point out some characteristics of this one.

Its public character

In many cases persecution of opponents is a hidden activity, with anonymous hit squads claiming their victims at night, the criminals covering up their steps. This practice was not unknown in Malawi under Kamuzu, but was not made use of in the Jehovah's Witnesses' case. Their persecution was public, and intended to be so. It was to have a deterrent effect.

Its extrajudicial character

No persecution for religious reasons can ever be legal. During the first peak of the persecution (1963/64), there was not a shred of a legal base for persecution. In 1967 a legal pretense for persecution was produced, providing for a ban and for prison sentences for those who contravened the ban. But the persecution started as soon as Kamuzu had made his remarks, it did not wait for legal niceties to be completed. And once they were there, they were disregarded. The beatings, parading, killings, destruction of crops, humiliations and expulsions were carried out without any reference to the legal system, until 1975.

The extrajudicial character of the persecution was officially emphasized at the Zomba 1972 convention, which appealed to government "to give maximum possible protection to members of the party who deal with the

adherents of those sects."³⁹ This protection was given to the maximum. The party was taken to be the highest legal authority, its members could act freely as investigators, accusers, judges and executioners. This protection seems to apply even under the new government. None, to my knowledge, has been asked to account for crimes committed against Jehovah's Witnesses.

The extra cruelty

Taking the situation for what it was, some of the persecution of the Jehovah's Witnesses could be taken as "lawful" because there was some kind of legal base for it. By government order, the Jehovah's Witnesses were banned, and by the same order clandestine activities were threatened with punishment by up to 14 years in prison. In 1972, by party resolution, expulsion and expropriation of property was added. Local MCP leaders may have seen this as a legal base for persecution. But the sufferings inflicted went in most cases far beyond what was provided for in this "legal" base. There was no provision in it for torture, public parading of victims, slashing of crops, burning of houses, murder. All these were extras, executed with intensity and delight, and with random crowds participating in the show.

One Youth Leaguer held an extended piece of the rope in one hand. The other was busy blowing on his whistle. By the time we had reached Chitakale, about 3 km from Mulanje boma, a crowd followed behind me. The whistling Youth Leaguer prompted the group into a song: "Wopanda card sachidya, sachidya, uyo chimubvundira."⁴⁰

Shame and sexual violence

In Malawian societies proper behaviour in order not to be shamed is considered to be of high value, and Kamuzu, at the Zomba 1972 convention, emphasized very much the need for the youth to follow traditional cultural values of good behaviour. In the persecution the party members were obviously encouraged to break the taboos of decency.

Arrived at Gowoka 7 p.m. in June 1972 and here they were told to buy cards but they declined So, they were stripped of their clothes and put outside their houses for all to see. Stayed outside from 9 pm

³⁹ Malawi News 19 September 1972 [Tuesday].

⁴⁰ "The one without card will not eat it [the maize, the food], will not eat it, that one, it will rot for him" (Int Harris Nakhumwa 11 April 1995 [Peter Mitunda]).

to 2 am without clothes. They were six of them i.e. him, his wife, and the founder Mr Amosi and his wife and some other two ladies.⁴¹

Sexual taboos are even stronger in Malawi than those of shame, with the incest taboo being the strictest. Attempts to force Jehovah's Witnesses to publicly violate this taboo were a frequent aspect of torture inflicted:

[After having been paraded round the village naked] they were put in lines and fathers were forced to face their daughters while naked, similarly mothers were asked to face their sons while naked.⁴²

They undressed us completely men as well as women and our children. After undressing us they could take a man and his daughter to have sex. When we refused they could whip us like cows.⁴³

Pregnant women were spared neither shame nor abuse:

By then, she was pregnant (7 months), but when the Youthmen came to her home, they got hold of her and beat her severely. Thereafter they raped her in her own house all five of them. After that they let her go while crying bitterly. When she came out of the house she found her father literally naked having been beaten heavily.⁴⁴

The Role of State Organs

The police

In the persecution the police played different roles. The police's role is to protect people against those who break the law. If anyone is apprehended doing so, it is the duty of the police to secure the evidence and hand over the law breakers to the judiciary system. For the period 1963/4 I found no evidence that the police (colonial or independent) did anything to stop the forced selling of party cards, nor did I find evidence for this later. This suggests that the police colluded in the persecution. The police also seems to have shared in it in other ways, like keeping detained Jehovah's Witnesses and, on occasion, beating them, too.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Int Winston S.B. Neba 18 April 1995 [Munthali].

⁴² Int Frank Homela 11 April 1995 [Charles Eliyasi].

⁴³ Int Mchima Msuku 10 April 1995 [Esnat Mdolo].

⁴⁴ Int Alabia Bernard 18 April 1995 [Rosemary T. Muhuwo].

⁴⁵ To Mr Karioti's surprise, he was taken to Bvumbwe Police Station instead of being taken to Mrs Chitalo. There he was beaten badly by a certain police constable by the name of xxx (Int Mr Karioti 12 April 1995 [R.M. Soko]).

On the other hand it is very clear from the records that often the police protected the Jehovah's Witnesses⁴⁶ or assisted them. Sometimes police cars ferried them to safety,⁴⁷ and in one instance at least the police, in a night action, witnessed by the DC of Nsanje, Harry Ghabu, ferried Jehovah's Witnesses back to safety in Mozambique, from where they had been taken previously by the MCP.⁴⁸ The police both assisted in the persecution and assisted Jehovah's Witnesses against their persecutors. It is understandable that Kamuzu preferred that MCP and MYP deal with them.

The army

In the available material there is no evidence that the army shared in the persecution, except that it provided some of the vehicles used for the forced repatriation from Zambia. On the other hand there is evidence that they helped transport fleeing Witnesses to safety, and prisoners from Dzaleka, who had to serve part of their sentence working for the army, were treated very well.⁴⁹

The role of the Christians

In the material accumulated so far there is no evidence of active involvement of any church (as an organization) or of any higher church leader like ministers or priests. Also there is no evidence that the top church leadership of any denomination publicly opposed the violations of human rights.⁵⁰ On the less official level there was sometimes the feeling that the Jehovah's Witnesses got what they deserved, or, more frequently,

⁴⁶ A randomly selected case: "The police officer, Mr Lidamlendo, showed sympathy. They, together with his family, were released and sent home with a police escort" (Int Mr Meke Ndege, 17 April 1995 [Ashanie Gawa]).

⁴⁷ Int Mr L. Chikopa, 9 April 1995 [Peter Kalawa]; Int Chief Josamu Kwendanjati 14 April 1995 [Rosemary T. Muhuwo].

⁴⁸ Int Mr Meke Ndege 17 April 1995 [Ashanie Gawa].

⁴⁹ Int Sidreck Khoromana 13 April 1995 [Charles Eliyasi].

⁵⁰ I heard that the Catholic Bishops tried to influence the government through representations, but I have not found the evidence yet. *By now I know that they participated in an interdenominational Christian delegation, in which Bishop Patrick Kalilombe was a Catholic member. Kamuzu listened in a friendly way and promised to investigate and do something about it. This is where the story ends (Personal communication Bishop Kalilombe).

that they had drawn it upon themselves.⁵¹ When I discussed the persecution of the Jehovah's Witnesses in a group, the first question after my presentation was: "Do you think that it was right for the Jehovah's Witnesses to refuse to buy party cards?" The Jehovah's Witnesses were rivals to the Christian churches, and there was also some feeling that it was not too bad to have these rivals out of the way. Beyond such feelings of antipathy there was a lot of active participation in the persecution. The Jehovah's Witnesses, living almost exclusively in the Christian areas of Malawi, would be persecuted by MCP members, most of whom would be members of various Christian churches. Some of them even held positions like deacons and elders. In a number of cases there was support from Christians in various positions. One example are priests from Thunga Parish and Nantipwiri Pastoral Centre close by who helped as they could,⁵² as did their neighbour, the Italian Mr Dondi.⁵³ After the MYP had attacked the Jehovah's Witnesses congregation meeting at Chitawira Kingdom Hall in Blantyre in June 1972 and beaten and scattered the worshippers,⁵⁴ "some Catholics and CCAP ... could hide them in their houses, tell them when the MYPs were coming and provided hiding and food."⁵⁵ There are other cases where help from Christians is reported, but the overall picture is very mixed, as it seems with more shadow on it than light.

Those who helped

In the dreadful picture of persecution from verbal harassment via shame and torture to murder, there are some (though too few) bright spots. How many sympathized with them and were too afraid to do anything is difficult to assess. Then there were others who did not help them, but in no way would they have done anything to harm them. If there had been more of these people, less persecution would have happened. Direct help for the Jehovah's Witnesses was often received from relatives. Some of them were

⁵¹ "Christian churches felt that the problem of Jehovah's Witnesses was of their own making and had to solve it single handedly. The Christians often said to hell with their uncompromising doctrine" (Int Mr Governor Chisale 1 April 1995 [Aloisious Nthenda]).

⁵² Int N.N. 13 April 1995 [Aloisious Nthenda].

⁵³ Int Mr Karioti 12 April 1995 [R.M. Soko].

⁵⁴ "The Witnesses were beaten like hell. Some broke their legs, arms and the situation was worse for nursing mothers and children. They could not run very fast and were the victims of the day" (Int N.N. 9 April 1995 [Aloisious Nthenda]).

⁵⁵ Int N.N. 9 April 1995 [Aloisious Nthenda].

members of either MCP or the Youth League, and they would warn the Witnesses of impending attacks. Sometimes the warnings came even from MCP members who were not related to the intended victims. Due remembrance should also be accorded to those who were in the system, and from there tried to lessen the suffering, like one woman MCP secretary whose name was forgotten but who is still remembered for "emphasizing on reducing the persecution ordeal on the Jehovah's Witnesses like stopping the people from beating them so much."⁵⁶ In some cases holders of competing authority with the party used it to help Jehovah's Witnesses. Chief Chiendausiku "ordered that in his area no house was to be set on fire and nobody was to be harassed."⁵⁷ Since he could not keep the Witnesses safe, he had to advise them to flee to Mozambique. Other chiefs did not reveal that there were Jehovah's Witnesses in their villages.⁵⁸ On Chisi Island in Lake Chirwa the Jehovah's Witnesses were never molested.⁵⁹

Help from Christians, from relatives, from the police and from the army has already been described earlier. The state of Israel has created a special category and a memorial for those non-Jews who helped Jews against their persecutors. I think even in Malawi those who helped, secretly or not so secretly, should be given due recognition, MCP members included.

Responsibility

Kamuzu knew nothing!

On Friday, January 5, 1996, the Daily Times came out with a banner headline: "Kamuzu apologizes, urges reconciliation." In this "apology" he made it very clear that he had known nothing about the cruelties inflicted and that, if indeed "suffering was caused by anybody in this country in the name of nationhood," he had known nothing of it. Kamuzu did not claim that he had lost his memory of it, he claimed that he had never known about it. I think it would have been good if the Daily Times had also proposed a revised song for popular consumption:

Mtsogoleri: Zonse	Leader: Everything
Onse: Zonse zimene n'za Kamuzu Banda	All: Everything belongs to Kamuzu Banda
Mtsogoleri: Zonse	Leader: Everything

⁵⁶ Int Mr I. Malindadi 17 April 1995 [Hanna Bonzo].

⁵⁷ Int Mr L. Chipoka 9 April 1995 [Peter Kalawa].

⁵⁸ Int Mr L. Chipoka 9 April 1995 [Peter Kalawa].

⁵⁹ Information from Joe de Gabriele, 15 May 1996.

Onse: Zonse zimene n'za Kamuzu Banda	All: Everything belongs to Kamuzu Banda
Mtsogoleri: Misewu yonse	Leader: All the roads
Onse: ya Kamuzu Banda	All: [belong to] Kamuzu Banda
Mtsogoleri: Misewu yonse	Leader: All the roads
Onse: ya Kamuzu Banda	All: [belong to] Kamuzu Banda
Mtsogoleri: Koma kuzunza	Leader: But persecution
Onse: Koma kuzunza anazunza ena.	All: But persecution, others did it.
Mtsogoleri: Koma kuzunza	Leader: But persecution
Onse: Koma kuzunza anazunza ena.	All: But persecution, others did it.
Mtsogoleri: Zonse	Leader: Everything
Onse: Zonse zimene n'za Kamuzu Banda	All: Everything belongs to Kamuzu Banda.
Mtsogoleri: Zonse	Leader: Everything
Onse: Zonse zimene n'za Kamuzu Banda	All: Belongs to Kamuzu Banda
Mtsogoleri: Masukulu onse	Leader: All the schools
Onse: a Kamuzu Banda	All: Belong to Kamuzu Banda
Mtsogoleri: Masukulu onse	Leader: All the schools
Onse: a Kamuzu Banda	All: Belong to Kamuzu Banda
Mtsogoleri: Kupha Amboni	Leader: To kill the Witnesses
Onse: Kupha Amboni anapha ndi ena.	All: Others killed the Witnesses
Mtsogoleri: Kupha Amboni	Leader: To kill the Witnesses
Onse: Kupha Amboni anapha ndi ena.	All: Others killed the Witnesses
Mtsogoleri: Zonse	Leader: Everything
Onse: Zonse zimene n'za Kamuzu Banda	All: Belongs to Kamuzu Banda
Mtsogoleri: Zonse	Leader: Everything
Onse: Zonse zimene n'za Kamuzu Banda	All: Belongs to Kamuzu Banda
Mtsogoleri: Koma zoipa	Leader: But evil things
Onse: amachita ena	All: Others have done them.
Mtsogoleri: Koma zoipa	Leader: But evil things
Onse: amachita ena	All: Others have done them
Mtsogoleri: Iye Mkango	Leader: Him the Lion
Onse: Iye Mkango, iye sanadziwe	All: Him the Lion, he did not know
Mtsogoleri: Iye Mkango	Leader: Him the Lion
Onse: Iye Mkango, iye sanadziwe	All: Him the Lion, he did not know.

Though Kamuzu was clever, his attempt to make himself blameless by putting the blame on his subordinates for whom he was responsible, did not work. The attempt can, following the example of so many in Germany, also be made the other way round: "Yes, we committed some atrocities, but it was all on orders, it is the higher authorities that are responsible." Though it is possible that occasionally an MCP member may have acted under direct pressure from higher authorities, the many cases of violence seem to have been carried out usually by people quite happy to do so, and

quite eager to get their profit out of it, be it in terms of fun, sadism, material benefits or political favour.⁶⁰ That non-participation in these outrages was quite a possibility is shown by men like Chief Chiendausiku.

Healing the nation

The crimes against the Jehovah's Witnesses were committed under the guise of achieving the unity of the nation. But by now it has dawned on most people that neither the unity of the graveyard nor the unity of the prison camp is real unity. A new approach, more honest and more honourable, is needed. If the power of coercion has failed to unite the nation, is there any power that can heal the rifts that have been created?

Kamuzu never apologized

Kamuzu asked for "reconciliation and forgiveness amongst us all," as if anyone had wronged him. He did not specify who had wronged him, nor did he specify who had been wronged by him (sorry, I forgot - none had been wronged by him, only by his subordinates and by impostors acting in his name). In order not to be forgotten in a time of rapid change and sometimes short memories, I think, it is good to quote the "apology" in full:

During my term of office, I selflessly dedicated myself to the good cause of Mother Malawi in the fight against Poverty, Ignorance and Disease among many other issues; but if within the process, those who worked in my government or through false pretence in my name or indeed unknowingly by me, pain and suffering was caused to anybody in this country in the name of nationhood, I offer my sincere apologies. I also appeal for a spirit of reconciliation and forgiveness amongst us all.⁶¹

Obviously such general calls for reconciliation and apologies for sins committed by others do not heal the nation, because they lack two indispensable elements of all reconciliation: honesty and openness.⁶²

⁶⁰ This parallels the findings of an American author who recently claimed that in almost all cases the worst atrocities of the holocaust and other persecutions were committed by volunteers.

⁶¹ *Daily Times*, 5 January 1996 (front page).

⁶² *Now Kamuzu's portrait adorns the most valuable banknote circulating in Malawi.

Criminal justice

One way to bring about a healing would be to pursue the criminals in the courts. But the already overtaxed and understaffed judicial system of Malawi could hardly hope to cope. If against every Jehovah's Witnesses only one crime was committed, that would produce about 30,000 to 50,000 court cases. Even if "minor crimes" can be considered as no longer open for prosecution due to the statute of limitations, thousands of serious crimes would have to be dealt with. A related possibility would be to pick out a few of the worst crimes and prosecute the culprits. This attempt has so far failed in the Mwanza trial, since it was difficult to prove that the real criminals were not those who had killed the victims, but the highest authorities of the state. This led to the grotesque result that both the actual killers and the possible instigators of the crime went away scot free.

XXX who remained behind was caught, tied like a wheel, then thrown into a borehole and he died there. People in the village saw this happen in broad daylight but could not say a thing because they were afraid. When the police came to investigate the matter, the chairman of the League, Mr Magwira, denied any knowledge of such an act. He suggested that XXX might have been sent to Dzaleka and the matter ended there.⁶³

If a case like this would be taken up by the courts, it would be easy to argue that Kamuzu did not order this particular crime. And it is most unlikely that he did order it. Therefore his responsibility for it cannot be established by means of the legal system. But those who actually killed XXX could be prosecuted, because there should be enough witnesses still available. But would they be willing to testify?

Confession

If criminal justice is not very practical in achieving justice and by that healing, confession would be a way. Such confessions would have to be full, honest, personal and open. Then forgiveness and amnesty could be granted. From the Jehovah's Witnesses side there is a great willingness to forgive, but from the other side I have not become aware of even one attempt to confess and/or to ask for forgiveness. Though neither Kamuzu nor anyone else can apologize by blaming others for his sins, to some extent an apology, if not a confession, on behalf of others is a possibility. I propose that one of the churches should start. The leadership could confess

⁶³ Int Michael Job 10 April 1995 [R.M. Soko].

their inactivity, the church could then apologize to the Jehovah's Witnesses for the many acts of cruelty against them committed by some of its members, and to make the apology realistic, a sufficient number of atrocities should be mentioned as examples of what the apology is for.

What would help a church to attain peace, would also help a party. Here all major parties should use the opportunity. The MCP has not said a word of apology to the Jehovah's Witnesses, not even in an indirect way. Other parties can hardly confess or apologize in the same way as the MCP should, but individual apologies and confessions would be in order. How many of present day UDF leaders were responsible MCP leaders at the time from 1967 till 1978, when most of the atrocities were committed? If they had any share in them, a confession could bring forgiveness, and if they had no share in them, or if they tried to reduce the persecution, a full disclosure would be appropriate. The same applies to those who were MPs then and now, even if now they belong to a different party.

The National Compensation Tribunal

This tribunal is obviously a serious attempt to address injustices of the past. Compensation cannot undo crimes, but it can achieve recognition of the crime and vindication of the victim, and in some measure it is a kind of apology of the public to the victim. Good as the idea is, it may not be as good for the Jehovah's Witnesses, since compensation can be given on application by the victim (or relatives, if the victim is no longer alive). I fear that many Jehovah's Witnesses will not apply because of their distant attitude to the state and its institutions. My proposal is therefore that, in the issue of compensation, Jehovah's Witnesses should not be treated just as anybody else, but that special efforts should be made by the National Compensation Tribunal to make sure that they will not be left out. If I understand correctly, the Tribunal is geared towards individuals. Though Jehovah's Witnesses suffered as individuals, they were subjected to these sufferings because they belonged to a group. Therefore an attempt should be made to take this into account, deal with the group, and if the Jehovah's Witnesses' organization in Malawi should refuse, a similar approach could be made by proxy.⁶⁴

⁶⁴ *The National Compensation Tribunal has since done its work by compensating with large amounts of money some persecuted individuals. None of them was a Jehovah's Witness nor was any notice taken of their persecution. Their property in town was restored.

A public record

At the moment it is difficult to discern any major movement toward either apology or confession. Is it that apology or confession is seen as shameful? If no confession is forthcoming, a public record could help to a certain extent. It would not produce forgiveness, but it can produce awareness. In Germany, major parts of the concentration camps have been preserved, as a memorial to remind every new generation as to what crimes our nation has been able to commit. I propose that a simple monument be constructed as a sign of the admission of national guilt to commemorate and honour the victims of the persecution.⁶⁵ A good venue for it would be a place not too far from the Independence Arch in Blantyre, possibly in the direction of the Malawi Museum or not so far from Blantyre Civic Centre. The monument could bear a number of names of Jehovah's Witnesses who were killed because of their faith.

Such a monument can only be symbolic, not informative. Therefore a written and printed record would be needed, too. I do not propose to restrict this to one form, but that various ways of collection and publication should be used. It would be good if the government would do its share in such an endeavour, but I think to wait for it to do so would not be good. Malawi is no longer a one-party nation, where all responsibility lies with the government. In the new Malawi, a multiplicity of initiatives are appropriate. Let the government do its share, indeed, but let the lawyers, the researchers, the churches, the students, the victims, the poets (and even the perpetrators) do their share (all in their own different and special ways) to put on public record what happened, how it happened, and what the consequences were.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ One small section of it should serve to honour those who helped them, often under personal risk. *No public record has been made of the persecution yet, and the most valuable bank note so far is adorned by the portrait of Kamuzu Banda.

⁶⁶ Cf. Kenneth R. Ross, "Does Malawi (Still) Need a Truth Commission?" Faith and Knowledge Seminar No. 46, Chancellor College, 13 June 1996. During discussion of this paper Dr Moira Chimombo argued that the University should take the initiative in such an exercise.

8 Christian Missions and Western Colonialism: Soulmates or Antagonists?¹ (1998)

Assumptions galore!

When the colonial period was coming to an end for most of the countries of Africa in the 1960s, some wise men in Europe were convinced—and even published books on the subject—that with the end of colonial rule, Christianity, too, would come to an end. The argument was so simple that readers believed it: Christianity is very alien to Africa, those (comparatively few) Africans who did become Christians did so because they were forced (by circumstances or more directly) to accept the religion of their masters. With the decline of colonialism, collaboration would not yield any benefits any more, so Christianity would lose its appeal and would decline. Islam, being a genuinely "non-white" religion, would then take over.

Being so devoid of any factual content, the argument is worth quoting for the fun of it (and because many people believed it and even German television gave the author repeated opportunity to spread his wisdom):

At the same time the Christian mission in Africa lost its appeal. During the colonial period acceptance of Christianity might have brought some advantages—the convert would have been the partner of the powerful. But to confess Christianity at the end of the colonial era would make no sense, would be ruinous.²

Konzelmann assumes that the only success Christianity had in Africa was gained because it was part and parcel of the colonial machinery of oppression, and in such an oppressive situation, there are always a few

¹ First presented as Faith and Knowledge Seminar No 34 on 9.3.1995 at Chancellor College of the University of Malawi. Then published as: Klaus Fiedler, "Christian Missions and Western Colonialism: Soulmates or Antagonists?" in: Kenneth R. Ross (ed), *Faith at the Frontiers of Knowledge*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1998, pp. 218-234.

² Gerhard Konzelmann, *Die islamische Herausforderung*, Hamburg 1980. See chapter "Afrika, der islamische Kontinent [Africa, the Islamic Continent]." The quote is from p. 285. Translation mine. To support his argument for the inevitable rise of Islam to become the religion of Africa, he quotes a French missionary who in the 1920s (!) described the spread of Islam in the early years of the 20th century, when Islam did spread in East Africa, though by 1920 the Islamic expansion had mostly come to a halt.

collaborators. African Christianity is nothing genuine, because, being alien to Africa, it simply cannot be genuine.

Here Konzelmann and many others follow the Marxist concept that there is nothing spiritual in religion, that it is just a reaction to material deprivation. And as soon as communism/socialism will do away with material deprivation (and that will be very soon!), religion will just wither away since there will be no need for it. In the same way, if Christianity is seen as nothing but an aspect of colonialism, then there will be no need (and no use) for it any more as soon as colonialism withers away. But while colonialism did wither away, in most countries barely putting up a fight, Christianity did not wither away as promised. Indeed, after independence Christian growth rates increased considerably, while the predicted growth of Islam did not take place at all. Today Africa is a predominantly Christian continent, and Africa south of the Sahara even more so.

At a time when colonialism was declining, but Socialism/Communism was not yet obviously following the same course,³ Walter Rodney put similar arguments to better use: In his book *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*,⁴ which during my days as a student at Dar-es-Salaam University sold like hot cakes there,⁵ he does take note of some of the differences between the missionaries and the colonial powers. But they all grabbed alike "their" sections of Africa: Karl Peters (Mkono wa Damu "Bloody Hand"), Livingstone, Stanley, Harry Johnston, de Brazza, General Gordon.⁶

The Christian missionaries were as much part of the colonizing forces as were the explorers, traders and soldiers. There may be room for arguing whether in a given colony the missionaries brought the other colonialist forces or vice versa, but there is no doubting the fact that missionaries were agents of colonialism in the practical sense whether or not they saw themselves in that light. The imperialist adventurer, Sir Harry Johnston

³ "A glance at the remarkable advance of Socialism over the last fifty-odd years will show that the apologists for capitalism are spokesmen of a social system that is rapidly expiring" (Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, London/Dar-es-Salaam 1972, p. 18).

⁴ London/Dar-es-Salaam 1972.

⁵ That was before Socialism had fully ruined the economy, so that people could still buy books.

⁶ Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, London/Dar-es-Salaam, 1972, p. 154f.

disliked missionaries, but he conceded that 'each mission station is an exercise in colonization.'⁷

In Rodney's concept of African realities the missionaries, by being more human by degrees (and therefore even fighting some gross abuses of colonialism), had the important task of keeping the engine of colonialism from overheating and thereby destroying itself. But their very difference made them part of the same system: Oil is very different from an engine, but oil and engine belong to the same system. Try to drive a car without oil, or try to drive oil without an engine, and you will see that they need each other to achieve anything at all in the way of transport.

The church's role was primarily to preserve the social relations of colonialism, as an extension of the role it played in preserving the social relations of capitalism in Europe. Therefore the Christian church stressed humility, docility and acceptance... churches could be relied upon to preach turning the other cheek in the face of exploitation, and they drove home the message that everything would be right in the next world.⁸

Rodney concedes that in serving colonialism the church performed a few progressive tasks, like the fight against the killing of twins,⁹ and he is also willing to accept that not all missionaries saw themselves as the agents of colonialism that they were. But these small differences do not account in any way for the survival of Christianity after the fall of colonialism. For this a new interpretation is necessary. Yes, the missions were part and parcel of colonialism, and that they have not died with colonialism is due to the fact that in the 1960s colonialism did not really die, but just transformed itself from (political) colonialism to (economic) neocolonialism. And the engine of neocolonialism needs spiritual lubrication as much as the exploitative machine of colonialism had needed it before. This is clearly shown by the fact that the educated elites of the Livingstonia type ("black Scotsmen")¹⁰ were not really the leaders into independence but the nucleus of the capitalist elites that would become the bridgeheads of the metropolises in the periphery, thus perpetuating the colonial exploitation with more sophisticated (neocolonial) methods.¹¹

⁷ Ibid., p. 277.

⁸ Ibid., p. 278.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 272.

¹¹ In this concept of history it is assumed that the capitalist world, centred in the "metropolises" of Europe and America, relies on local élites in the exploited

To round off the picture, a few glimpses from Cameroon (or, to be more precise, from a German's interpretation of events that happened in Cameroon). These glimpses refer to the missionary work of the church I was born into and of which I am still a pastor, the German Baptist Convention and its missionary efforts in Cameroon.¹² The Baptists were there before any colonialist took any sustained note of the area. Günther, the author of a "non-imperialist mission history"¹³ states that "the Baptist missionary movement for Cameroon (the missionaries and the mission society) integrated itself without resistance into the colonial state," and humbly offered its services to educate the Africans to become "obedient subjects" and "useful workers."¹⁴ He accuses the German missionaries especially of teaching German in their schools, the language of colonialism. In order to keep his concepts clear, he sometimes bends the facts. A vivid example is this: After describing the "progressive" ideas of Eduard Scheve, the founder of the German Baptist Mission in Cameroon, he concludes:

This programme, sounding similar to present missionary concepts, cannot have been meant to be serious, because right from the beginning Scheve and others shared the ideological concept of the superiority of Europeans over Africans.¹⁵

Some facts that need interpretation

I love wild statements and beautiful assumptions because they make such fascinating reading. But I think I have presented a sufficient florilegium of these. We know by now that missionaries really were the soulmates of the colonialists. Some missionaries were happy to be just that, and those who refused to be soulmates were soulmates nevertheless.

countries for continuing the colonial exploitation in a more indirect and more efficient (neo-colonial) way.

¹² Jürgen Günther, *Mission im kolonialen Kontext. Beiträge zur Geschichte der Mission der deutschen Baptisten in Kamerun 1891 - 1914*. Initiative Schalom, 1991, 148 pp. [MA Hamburg 1985].

¹³ Ibid., p. 3.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 83.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 49. Jürgen Günther *assumes* what concepts Scheve shared. A fact is that several Cameroonians stayed for years with the Scheve family to get their education in Berlin. But maybe the Scheve family did not mean that seriously either.

As a missionary or ex-missionary I may be forgiven for not accepting every statement about the likes of us which I find in scholarly books, and as a historian I cannot just answer wild statements from the other side by shouting equally wild statements from "our" side. Is it not true that the missionaries put an end to the slave trade? Did Livingstone not discover Africa? And did the missionaries not bring civilization, progress, good agriculture and real faith into the darkness of heathen Africa? And did not the missionaries fight for Africa's independence?¹⁶ People like these cannot have been soulmates of colonialism!

Leaving aside slogans, accusations and glorifications, there are three basic facts about the relationship between colonialism and missions which cannot be disputed, but which nevertheless need interpretation.

Missions are older than colonialism

Christianity was ever a missionary religion. The oldest church in Africa, Alexandria, is just 30 years younger than Christianity,¹⁷ and Christian missionaries had reached Ethiopia in the 4th century, the Visigoths, remote ancestors of my own tribe,¹⁸ in the same century and China in the 7th.¹⁹

For those African areas which European Christian missionaries reached via the ocean, some "complicity" between missionaries and colonialists can be assumed because they used the same transport, but even in more recent missionary history, they did reach a number of areas before any colonialist cast a coveting eye on them. Take for example Mary²⁰ and Robert

¹⁶ Catholic missionaries for example paid the only fine Julius Nyerere was ever convicted to pay in his struggle for the independence of Tanzania.

¹⁷ This was the first congregation of what is now the Coptic Church of Egypt, and African theologians decisively influenced the course of Christian history.

¹⁸ Ulfilas, son of a Greek mother (a captive of war) and a Visigoth father, translated the Bible into the first of the many Germanic languages. A beautiful copy of the bible he translated was kept for centuries in the monastery of Werden, Ruhr, 25 km south west of Wanne-Eickel, where I was born. During the 30 Years' War the Swedes stole it, now it is kept in Uppsala. Maybe it was good that they stole it, they may have looked after it better than the Germans might have done.

¹⁹ We only know the Chinese name of the first missionary there: A-lo-pen. He came overland from the Church of the East ("Nestorians").

²⁰ For her life see: Mora Dickson, *Beloved Partner. Mary Moffat of Kuruman*, Gaborone/Kuruman: Botswana Book Centre/Kuruman Moffat Mission Trust (POB 34 Kuruman, South Africa) 1989 [1974; 1976].

Moffat, working for five decades among the Southern Tswana in Kuruman.²¹ Two notable examples on a larger scale are the kingdoms of Imerina (Madagascar) and Buganda (Uganda) which both became Christian kingdoms before colonial rule after going through a period in which the church was severely persecuted and which then ended in a "Christian revolution."²² Malawi offers further examples: One can rightly accuse the early missionaries at Magomero (1861),²³ Cape Maclear (1875) and Blantyre (1876) of meddling in politics, but only imagination can make them colonialists.

During the colonial period the relationship between the missions and the colonial government was characterized by cooperation and conflict.

Here again Malawi offers many examples. When the European powers had decided to start the scramble for Africa at the Berlin Conference in 1884/5, the Blantyre missionaries accepted the fact and tried their best to make sure that Britain would get Southern Malawi, not Portugal, to whom Britain had already "ceded" the territory.²⁴ On the other hand Scott, being among other things the editor of the first newspaper in this area, felt free to criticize whatever he (and the mission) held to be incompatible with Christian principles and good governance in the running of the Protectorate

²¹ *For a study of Moffat's theology see: Bruce Ritchie, *The Theology of Robert Moffat of Kuruman*, PhD, University of Malawi 2006.

²² *For Madagascar see: Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, ²1986, pp. 269-270; Bengt Sundkler and Christopher Stead, *A History of the Church in Africa*, Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp. 487-509. For Buganda see: John V. Taylor, *The Growth of the Church in Buganda. An Attempt at Understanding*, London: SCM, 1958, pp. 19-60.

²³ There the UMCA missionaries under Bishop Mackenzie even engaged in aggressive warfare in order to help the oppressed Mang'anja against the Yao, who were seen as oppressing them. Jonathan Q. Newell, "'There were Arguments in Favour of Our Taking Up Arms': Bishop Mackenzie and the War Against the Yao in 1861," in Kenneth R. Ross (ed), *Faith at the Frontiers of Knowledge*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1998.

²⁴ Andrew C. Ross, *Blantyre Mission and the Making of Modern Malawi*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1996, pp. 75, 87, 95.

by the British.²⁵ There were many missionaries who behaved in the same way.

After the end of colonialism, neither mission nor church died

In spite of all ideological expectations and pious [socialist] predictions, the church had come to stay in Africa. After independence its growth accelerated considerably.²⁶ In the 1950s, Africa was 20% Christian, in 1965 about 32%, in 1970 about 36%, and today about 48%.²⁷

Not only the church is still with us in Africa, even the missions are still around and thriving. Whereas in the period immediately following independence sometimes the cry was heard: "Missionary go home!," today many church leaders do not face the problem of how to get rid of the missionaries, but of how to get enough of them.

After independence the missionaries of the "classical missions" did change their position in the church, many of them becoming "fraternal workers" and keeping a lower profile. But at the same time when the classical missions were retrenching their forces, many new missions came into various countries of Africa and were very much welcomed (not necessarily by the leaders and missionaries of the main line denominations, but definitely by the people).²⁸

Conflicts of soulmates or cooperation of antagonists?

This, I hope, makes it clear that missionaries and colonialists cannot have been soulmates, at least not in the long run. But maybe in the short run,

²⁵ See Kenneth R. Ross, "Vernacular Translation in Christian Mission: The Case of David Clement Scott and the Blantyre Mission 1888-1898," in K.R. Ross (ed), *Gospel Ferment in Malawi*, pp. 107-125 [120].

²⁶ Figures are based on the data in David Barrett, *World Christian Encyclopedia: A Comparative Survey of Churches and Religions in the Modern World AD 1900-2000*, Nairobi/Oxford/New York, 1982.

²⁷ During the same period the Muslim percentage rose from about 37 to 41%.

²⁸ A typical example for such a mission was the Southern Baptist Missionary Board, from which the Baptist Convention of Malawi originates. *See: Hany Longwe, *Democratization of the Christian Faith: The Influence of the Baptist Doctrine of the "Priesthood of All Believers" on the History of the Baptist Convention of Malawi (BACOMA)*, PhD, University of Malawi, 2008. *Published as: Hany Longwe, *Christians by Grace – Baptists by Choice. A History of the Baptist Convention of Malawi*, Mzuzu: Mzuni Press, 2011.

during the colonial episode in African history? Some more scrutiny is needed here before a verdict can be reached.

Missionary opponents of colonialism

Here Malawi is somewhat unusual since it can be proud of two missionaries who not only criticized abuses of colonialism, but who totally opposed colonialism on principle, Joseph Booth²⁹ and John Chilembwe.³⁰ Joseph Booth published in 1897 a book with the title "Africa for the African."³¹ In this book he calls the scramble for Africa a second magnificently unscrupulous proposal [after the slave trade] of the European to harness and exploit his African neighbor. The former clumsy proposal to annex and transplant the African's person was costly, cumbersome and infamous; the present proposal to purloin the land under his feet and adroitly to utilize the African as an instrument to disclose, develop and deposit its resources for the European's benefit, is the self-same in spirit, but more ingeniously dressed, further reaching in its effects, and far less likely to be challenged. It is a proposal to deprive 200 million of people of their birthright; to seize upon their property and permanently drain the wealth of Africa and the African's labour into European channels.³²

This concept Joseph Booth translated into political action when in 1899 he demanded, in the (in-)famous petition to Queen Victoria (Defender of the Christian Faith), that Malawi, after a period of "not exceeding 21 years" be restored "with its entire revenues to Native ownership and Government."³³

²⁹ Harry Langworthy, "Africa for the African." *The Life of Joseph Booth*, Blantyre: CLAIM, 1996 (Kachere Monograph no. 2); Klaus Fiedler, "Joseph Booth and the Writing of Malawian History: An Attempt at Interpretation," *Religion in Malawi* no 7, 1997, 30-38.

³⁰ The best source for John Chilembwe is still George Shepperson and Thomas Price, *Independent African. John Chilembwe and the Origins, Setting and Significance of the Nyasaland Native Rising of 1915*, Edinburgh: The University Press 1958. *The 6th edition is: George Shepperson and Thomas Price, *Independent African. John Chilembwe and the Nyasaland Rising of 1915*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2000.

³¹ Baltimore 1897, two editions. Republished in a scholarly edition by Laura Perry as: Joseph Booth, *Africa for the African*, Blantyre: CLAIM 1998 (Kachere Text no. 6).

³² Joseph Booth, *Africa for the African*, Baltimore, ²1897, p. 4.

³³ The petition was published, with adverse comment, by the Central African Times. After its publication Booth fled the territory, only to be allowed back after

The other radical missionary opponent of colonialism in Malawi was John Chilembwe, a missionary of the American National Baptist Convention, Inc. In 1900 he started missionary work in Mbombwe, more commonly known today as Providence Industrial Mission.³⁴ In 1915 he led the famous Chilembwe Rising.

Booth and Chilembwe (the first to have been baptized by Booth) shared their fundamental opposition to colonialism. They differed, though, in the means to be employed. Booth was a pacifist, so he would have rejected the idea of an armed uprising, had he known anything about it,³⁵ whereas Chilembwe saw the judicious use of arms as compatible with his Christian faith.

Both Booth and Chilembwe do not yield much in answering the question whether missionaries and colonialists were soulmates or antagonists. Yes, these two were antagonists, but they were exceptional in missionary circles of their days.

Missionaries and settlers

There is a Kikuyu proverb: "Guthiri mubey na muthungu" (There is no difference between a missionary and a settler).³⁶ I assume that this proverb, as so many others, expresses some truth, though not necessarily *the* truth. Was there a difference in Malawi? Settlers and missionaries often belonged to the same churches, visited each other, had tea together, and both were landowners and employers. Nevertheless a difference is very vividly described by Lewis Mataka Bandawe in his autobiography.

pledging in future to abstain from politics. For the text see: Kenneth R. Ross (ed), *Christianity in Malawi: A Source Book*, Mambo-Kachere, 1996, 192f.

³⁴ The official name of the church is African Baptist Assembly, before Kamuzu demanded a change it was National Baptist Assembly of Africa, Nyasaland, Inc. (Patrick Makondesa, *The Life and Ministry of Rev and Mrs Muocha of Providence Industrial Mission*, BEd, University of Malawi 1996, p. 1.) *Published as: Patrick Makondesa, *Moyo ndi Utumiki wa Mbusa ndi Mayi Muocha*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2000.

³⁵ Booth and his wife were deported from Basutoland and South Africa to England for complicity in a revolt they did not even know had happened. When Booth heard about it much later, he disapproved (Harry Langworthy, *The Life of Joseph Booth*, p. 481)

³⁶ Quoted in: F.B. Welbourn, *East African Rebels: A Study of some Independent Churches*, London 1961, p. 111.

Every European, with the exception of the missionaries and the Mandala people, had a *chikoti* - a whip made of hippo's hide - which he used on his domestic servants or labourers. The planters used the *chikoti* constantly on their labourers; it was used for any minor offence.³⁷ The *machila* carriers had a song which ran like this:

Leader: "Chikoti chiwawa"

Chorus: "Chiwawanji"

General chorus:

"Chiwawanji, chiwawanji, chiwawa-a-a."

Missionaries were also sometimes carried in a *machila*, but would the carriers sing that song for them?

There are other observations along similar lines: The Catholic missionaries in Malawi strongly opposed the taxation system which forced the "natives" to "work" for the settlers (as if they would not work on their own land) and they tried to provide alternative employment. Nkhoma Mission had a similar attitude,³⁸ whereas Livingstonia tried all it could to supply the settlers with skilled labour.³⁹

"How good that we did not get implicated in the Chilembwe Rising"

When the commission of inquiry sat after the rising, the Presbyterian missions were represented on it, if only to "represent native interests." Dr Hetherwick for example pointed out bad European behaviour in not replying to greetings by people of "lower rank."

I have seen many Europeans absolutely ignore a boy's salutation. The smallest drummer boy in the British army if he salutes Lord Kitchener receives a salute in return. There will be no difficulty if the European makes acknowledgment: it indicates that two gentlemen have met and not only one.⁴⁰

Here as in many other contexts the missionaries achieved improvements in colonial behaviour, but they did not challenge the colonial system as such.

³⁷ Lewis Mataka Bandawe, *Memoirs of a Malawian*, Blantyre: CLAIM 1971, p. 71.

³⁸ Martin Pauw, *Mission and Church in Malawi. The History of the Nkhoma Synod of the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian 1889-1962*, Lusaka: 1980, p. 190.

³⁹ Even here the question must be rightly asked if this was collaboration, subservience to the needs of colonialism, or if the mission pursued its own aims, namely giving the people as qualified an education as possible.

⁴⁰ Malawi National Archives COM-6 2/1/1. For more on the context see Kenneth R. Ross, "Crisis and Identity: Presbyterian Ecclesiology in Southern Malawi 1891-1993," Christian Engagement with African Cultural Dynamics - Theology Conference, 12-13 September 1997.

Occasionally missionaries would also put the colonial system to their own use. When Joseph Booth (then in Cape Town) had sent Elliot Kamwana as a Watchtower missionary to Malawi and when he had become successful, baptizing nearly 10000 people in a few months, they forgot all about religious freedom and asked the *boma* to do something about it, and the *boma* was happy to oblige.⁴¹ So he was banned,⁴² not as a religious competitor, but as politically subversive. But I guess the Livingstonia missionaries felt this to be a happy coincidence.

In the commission of inquiry after the Chilembwe Rising the missionaries were not only keen to represent African interests, they were also keen to prove that they had no responsibility for it. They managed to do this, but the fact remains that about 70 men found guilty of participating in the uprising, were "products" of the Presbyterian missions' educational system, including the second in command Gray Kufa.⁴³ And the fact also remains that no "products" of the Catholic system of education were involved.⁴⁴

Both the Presbyterians and the Catholics cooperated obviously with the colonial system. The Presbyterians, in spite of their abhorrence of armed resistance against colonial rule seem to have produced, in their educational system, people who thought otherwise.

Education or education for work?

What else is education for than for working? We all have to earn our living, and education is to help us with that. But when (German) colonial rule came to what is now Tanzania, the above quote was at the centre of a major controversy. The colonialists were convinced that Africans were lazy

⁴¹ See: J.C. Chakanza, "From Preacher to Prophet: Elliot Kenan Kamwana and the Watch Tower Movement in Malawi, 1908-1956" in: *Voices of Preachers in Protest*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1998.

⁴² In present day oral history of both Bamulonda and Jehovah's Witnesses, there are interesting and widely varying interpretations attached to this event.

⁴³ George Shepperson and Thomas Price, *Independent African. John Chilembwe and the Origins, Setting and Significance of the Nyasaland Native Rising of 1915*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2000 (Edinburgh University Press 1958/1987).

⁴⁴ The Catholics at that time were happy to build the church in the context of village life and not to challenge the colonial authorities. See Ian Linden, *Catholics, Peasants and Chewa Resistance in Nyasaland 1889-1939*, London: Heinemann, 1974. On the Montfort missionaries and the Chilembwe Rising see: Hubert Reijnaerts, Ann Nielsen, Matthew Schoffeleers, *Montfortians in Malawi. Their Spirituality and Pastoral Approach*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere 1997, pp. 138-145.

(by nature and by predilection), but they needed them desperately as workers in their houses and on their farms. Most German colonialists did not think highly of missionaries, but felt that they should be useful fools: Not just to preach to the natives, but "to teach them to work." But then, what need would there be for the missions' schools? They were useless, making the natives only proud. The missionaries protested. They protested against the notion that Africans were lazy: "They are not lazy, they are industrious and work hard, but they want to work on their own land." And in being convinced that this was exactly the place where Africans should work, they strongly opposed migrant labour.

The German missionaries in Tanzania in those days did not question the right of Germany to rule the country.⁴⁵ But by providing education, limited though it was, they gave the people a tool with which to assert their own identity.

A hotly debated issue among German missionaries of the 1930s was the teaching of English. Many, actually the majority of the Lutheran and Moravian missionaries, were convinced that African education ideally should be in the tribal language, and with the number of speakers being limited, Swahili would be considered. The most important reason given was that Africans should not be culturally alienated. But Africans were very keen to learn the language which would open the world for them (and which, incidentally, was the language of their colonial oppressors - or at least that's what we read in many books today). A considerable minority of the Lutheran and Moravian missionaries accepted that point and demanded that English be taught in their central schools, and they all finally won.⁴⁶

But how can this be judged? Where the missionaries insisted on the only use of "native" languages, they are being accused of holding the people back. Where they emphasized the use of English, the missionaries are

⁴⁵ One missionary, the Moravian Traugott Bachmann, who was very critical of colonial abuses while in Tanzania (until 1916), later came to the conviction that even good colonialism was fundamentally wrong (Traugott Bachmann, *Mein Gang durch diese Welt*, unpublished memoirs in Herrnhut Archives.) This is the only Moravian or Lutheran missionary in Tanzania before 1940 of whom I know having had such ideas.

⁴⁶ Dealt with in detail in Klaus Fiedler, *Christianity and African Culture. Conservative German Protestant Missionaries in Tanzania, 1900-1940*, Leiden/New York/Köln: Brill 1996, 125-128, 143-148. *Now available in Malawi (only) as: Klaus Fiedler, *Christianity and African Culture: Conservative German Protestant Missionaries in Tanzania*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1999.

accused of cultural imperialism and of making "Black Scotsmen." It must have been very difficult to do the right thing! I take it that the demand for learning a "colonial" language was then and is now a genuine expression of African culture, since it opens the door to the wider world.⁴⁷

If one accuses the missionaries as being unwittingly allies of colonialism, here is a chance to accuse them of being unwittingly anticolonialists, because it was to a large extent education (much of it indeed missionary education) that fuelled the movement for independence, and there was nothing strange in a leader in the struggle for independence either quoting (Banda) or translating (Nyerere) Shakespeare.

"They simply destroyed African culture"

Another accusation against "the missionaries" is that they were as destructive against African culture as the colonialists, or even more so.⁴⁸ Then they would not be just soulmates, but supersoulmates, even attacking the beautiful social institution of polygamy. On the other hand there is no doubt that missionaries vehemently opposed some customs which they felt to be blatantly opposed to the gospel, one of the most prominent of these in early Malawi being the *mwavi* poison ordeal to find out witches.⁴⁹ On the other hand it must also be observed that missionaries in general worked hard to learn the language of their hosts, and in that some did exceedingly well.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ African culture should not be defined as that which has historic roots in Africa but as that which is relevant for Africans. If the historic definition would be applied to the West, European culture would not contain reading or writing, not even the zero (and imagine today's computers without it!).

⁴⁸ For the sake of historical correctness it must not be overlooked that even colonialism was not always destructive of African culture, as the concept of "Indirect Rule" shows. Sometimes colonialism seems even to have stabilized aspects of African culture that were already losing its grip on the people, like the Ngoni dominance in Central and Northern Malawi. Without the British support (to quite some extent negotiated by the Livingstonia missionaries) the Chewa and Tumbuka might have long conquered the Ngoni chieftainships completely "by their women," a cultural process that has gone far, anyhow.

⁴⁹ In spite of their vehement opposition, witch hunts survived into more recent times, though forms seem to have changed somewhat.

⁵⁰ David C. Scott's dictionary of the Njanya language (*A Cyclopaedic Dictionary of the Mang'anja Language Spoken in British Central Africa*, Edinburgh: Church of Scotland, 1892, revised as: David C. Scott and Alexander Hetherwick, *Dictionary of*

Much has been made of the missionaries' opposition to polygamy, perhaps too much since they all in different ways found some means of accommodation,⁵¹ but it should also be emphasized that all of them strongly supported the family, which to me seems to be at the very heart of African culture (or any culture for that matter). They tried to hinder the breaking up of families through colonial interests like migrant labour. Does this already make them antagonists of the colonial system? I do not think so, but does it make them soulmates? I do not think so, either.

"He knew our language better than we did"

The British Church Missionary Society had started work among the Chagga on the slopes of Mt Kilimanjaro. When the Germans came in to rule and some Chagga resisted, the Germans accused the CMS of being on the wrong side. They withdrew under protest, and later handed over the nascent missionary work to the German Lutheran Leipzig Mission. That should qualify for missionary/colonialist collusion, shouldn't it? One of the early Leipzig missionaries was Bruno Gutmann.⁵² That soon after his arrival he took a German settler to court for mistreating two Chagga, was a minor thing.⁵³ The above quote, not polite but realistic, reveals that he was deeply engaged with Chagga culture.⁵⁴ He was convinced that the Chagga social order, though not perfect, was much closer to the divine will than European

the Nyanja Language, London: The Religious Tract Society, 1929) has not yet been surpassed, in spite of Chewa having been the national language of Malawi for many years under the supervision of the Chewa Board.

⁵¹ Analyzed for Lutherans and Moravians in: Klaus Fiedler, *Christianity and African Culture*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1999, pp. 56-63, 67f, 136, 183.

⁵² He worked in Tanzania from 1902 till 1938, from 1910 in Old Moshi (Kidia). He was a great writer and became one of the leading German Protestant missiologists of the period between the two wars.

⁵³ "Bericht über den Prozeß Mikaeli/Sauerbrunn vor dem Eingeborenengerichte Moschi und meine Beteiligung an ihm" (Moshi 12.2.1911). Gutmann failed to achieve justice.

⁵⁴ Reflected in his three volume study: *Die Stammeslehren der Dschagga* [The Tribal Teachings of the Chagga], München 1932-1936 [most of the teachings were entrusted to him by Mlasany Njau, who wanted Gutmann to preserve them after his death] and in his: *Das Recht der Dschagga* [Chagga Law], München, 1926.

culture.⁵⁵ His attitude showed in his close cooperation with the chief of Moshi (not a Christian), in his organization of his congregation along the lines of traditional neighbourhoods, in his (largely unwanted) endeavours to strengthen the clan structure, or in his (very successful) use of the traditional shield comradeships to inculturate Christian confirmation.⁵⁶

"They destroyed all of African customs and culture," missionaries were and are being accused. If that is true - usually not much proof is attached to the accusation - definitely neither Bruno Gutmann nor his Leipzig colleagues fit into that pattern. Take the example of circumcision, male and female. Gutmann did not go as far as Bishop Vincent Lucas of Masasi (UMCA), who actually Christianized the rites,⁵⁷ but he never opposed the custom.⁵⁸ Among the Chagga it was not the missionaries who tried to abolish circumcision, but in 1924 the Chagga Lutheran church leaders (duly elected and not representing those who elected them).⁵⁹ Gutmann was away in Germany then,⁶⁰ and when he came back there was the seemingly strange spectre of a missionary defending clitoridectomy and male circumcision against the African leadership of the church. But was the spectre really so strange? Gutmann just defended the people's right to make their own cultural decisions.⁶¹ A very democratic notion, which he even employed paternalistic methods to promote. (Was he not a child of his times?) Whose soulmate was Gutmann? Of colonialism? Hardly so. Of European

⁵⁵ In his only English article he called European civilization "a blatant blasphemy" ("The African Standpoint," *Journal of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures*, Vol. VIII, January 1935, no. 1, p. 1-17).

⁵⁶ For an overview in English see: Ernst Jaeschke, *Bruno Gutmann: His Life, His Thoughts, and His Work. An Early Attempt at a Theology in an African Context*, Arusha: Makumira Publications, 1985.

⁵⁷ Robin Lamburn, "The Yao of Tunduru," in Noel Q. King and Klaus Fiedler (eds), *Robin Lamburn - From a Missionary's Notebook: The Yao of Tunduru and Other Essays*, Saarbrücken/Fort Lauderdale: Breitenbach, 1991.

⁵⁸ As a Lutheran, he considered circumcision as an *adiaphoron*, something in between, being neither good nor bad in itself.

⁵⁹ Klaus Fiedler, *Christianity and African Culture*, pp. 75-84.

⁶⁰ The Versailles Treaty banned all German citizens from Tanzania from 1920 till 1925.

⁶¹ Clitoridectomy is bad, a fact that started to be recognized by Chagga Lutheran women in or close to 1972 (Communication Rev Daniel Lyatoo, 1972). When I visited Kidia first in 1971, there was no visible opposition yet (Communication Rev Daniel Lyatoo, 1971).

civilization? He would have been horrified! If he was anyone's soulmate, he was the Chagga's.⁶²

A question of methodology

In spite of some sarcasm, what I have tried to do here was to write history. And the results of the writing of history depend to quite some extent on the methodology employed and on the premises assumed. Much of what I have discussed reflects two different, though not necessarily opposing methods of writing history: The methods of generalization and the method of differentiation. Both have their merits and demerits. Walter Rodney, though he is aware of many details,⁶³ chose the generalizing approach, which is so common in Marxist conceptions of history. History follows certain immutable laws, and every detail of history can be related to these laws of historical development (and if that is difficult, it is always possible to bend a few interpretations or facts). In the generalizing method aberrations from the proper picture are not overlooked, but they cannot change the overall assessment.

Much of the assessment in the generalizing method may be based on the assessment of parallelism. In Germany over the last decade the population of storks declined by 50%, and so did the human birth rate. Both are facts, but which is to blame for which? Therefore it can be argued that much similarity between colonialism and the missionary enterprise is coexistence, not the sign of any intrinsic relationship.

The generalizing method has its value for the study of large areas, periods or cultural movements. But I must admit that I prefer the method of differentiation. Yes, colonialists had much in common, sometimes too much. But then this is to be expected. After all they were contemporaries, came from the same geographical region as the colonialists and directed their efforts to the same people as the colonialists. I therefore argue that their similarities are not that important, but that their differences should interest the historian foremost.

If I apply the method of generalization to my topic, the missionaries turn easily into soulmates of colonialism. And using different assumptions, the

⁶² The story goes that one day in Mombasa a thief stole a piece of his luggage. But as he shouted the word "thief" in Chagga and not in Swahili, nobody came to his help.

⁶³ In this he differs strongly from Konzelmann.

same method of generalization could be employed to make the same missionaries to be all antagonists of the colonial system.

Myths so easy, yet they must die

Whatever method one uses in writing history, assessments should be solidly based on facts, and therefore myths must die, beautiful (and useful) though they may be.⁶⁴ One such myth is that "the missionaries were part and parcel of colonialism and implacably hostile to African life and culture." Such a myth is useful: if the past is so depraved, then the present can only be brighter, and since the missionaries got it all wrong, we are much better now! But nice as this myth may be, the facts do not match it. It is high time that the scholarly community puts to rest such notions as that the missionaries were all alike and uniformly supported colonialism.

The missionaries were children of their times...

Questions which offer a choice of two options for an answer are tricky, they tend to create the illusion that one of the two options might be the right answer. Such a tricky question was put to me for this essay: Soul mates or antagonists? Neither nor! For soul mates the missionaries were too often the colonialists' best nuisance, and for antagonists the missionaries were too cooperative.

When I had just begun my studies at Makerere University, my professor, Noël Q King, a man as wise as his beard was long, told me: "Klaus, never forget, the missionaries were children of their times, just as much as we are of ours." This is the answer I want to give: The missionaries were children of their times. They shared many of the assumptions of the colonialists. Though they were often wiser, that was by degrees. Though they had no *chikoti* ready for instant use, they were not necessarily free of all feelings of racial superiority. Yes, they were children of their times. This can help us understand them, and also understand a few things which today we either do not approve or do not understand.

But just to call the missionaries "children of their time" would be too simple. They were children of their time, but they had an agenda of their own. That agenda was older than colonialism, had strong otherworldly roots and made them willing to face hardship and to risk (and sometimes

⁶⁴ I just heard a new one (from the female side): The missionaries are to be blamed for the AIDS crisis in Malawi (10-20% of the population are HIV positive). Why? "Because they never understood African sexuality."

lose) their lives.⁶⁵ This agenda was the agenda of the kingdom of Christ, a kingdom not of this world, but with quite some effects on this world. This agenda often allowed for cooperation with colonialism, often it demanded some kind of resistance. The interpretations of this agenda varied among missionaries, and the application of this interpretation to the historical situation varied, too. But another agenda there was.

... as we are of ours

If we admit that missionaries were children of their time, we also have to admit that we are children of our time. No history can be written without the writer interpreting the facts, and interpreting them as a child of her or his time. Admitted. But if the "child of his time" shows too clearly through the pages of the historian's interpretation, then I become suspicious, and I start to read the book not as a book about the subject indicated on the cover, but as a book about the author.

⁶⁵ *An example of such "pre-colonial" missionaries is Johannes Rebmann, who worked as a missionary not far from Mombasa in Kenya (then part of the Sultanate of Zanzibar) from 1846 to 1876. From 1851 to 1866 he shared the work with his wife Emma Kent, who had been a missionary in Egypt before her marriage (1851-1851). During those 29 years Rebmann never visited Europe. For the Rebmanns' Biography see: Steven Paas, *Johannes Rebmann. A Servant of God in Africa before the Rise of Western Colonialism*, Nürnberg: VTR, Bonn: VKW (edition afem), 2011.

9 Gender Equality in the New Testament: The Case of St Paul¹ (2003)

Introduction

One of the marvels of the Bible is that so many different people at different times in history have called this book their own, in spite of so many different cultures, life styles and political systems. The process of translation has been part of Christian expansion and survival over the centuries. Everywhere in this global process lurks the danger of a cultural reading of the Bible. The Bible has proved, in the long run, that it is able to put up quite some resistance to such cultural reading and has often hit back after periods of cultural suppression of part of its message to challenge what seemed to be the consensus of the custodians of its message.

The understanding of the "biblical role of women" is such a topic, which seemed to be so clear and to be settled once and for all, to be either accepted (by the conservatives) or opposed (by the liberals or the feminists), or to be wriggled around by those who want to be in neither of the two camps. But all these approaches have in common the fact that the biblical evidence is assessed on the background of the readers' concept of patriarchal European culture. Older expositors would not have been very conscious of their patriarchal bias, and some of the more "progressive" expositors after them would "unquestioningly" claim that the New Testament "unquestioningly" assumes a patriarchal culture.

The fact that patriarchal culture has been questioned and challenged so severely in many parts of the world toward the end of the 20th century and at the beginning of the 21st century affords Bible expositors with a good opportunity to look anew at the biblical evidence, this time with more awareness of the possibility of cultural bias in exegesis (both ways: against our predecessors and against ourselves). In this chapter, I want to bring the

¹ The original version of this article was first presented as a paper at the Association of Theology Institutions in Southern and Central Africa (ATISCA) Conference in Harare, Zimbabwe in December 1998; then it was published as: Klaus Fiedler, "Gender Equality in the New Testament: The Case of St. Paul" in: *Malawi Journal of Biblical Studies*, no. 1, 2003, pp. 19-36. A result of this article is: Janet Kholowa and Klaus Fiedler, *Mtumwi Paulo ndi Udindo wa Amayi mu Mpingo*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2001.

culturally controversial issue of gender relations in the churches in Malawi² into direct relationship with the biblical evidence. In doing so I hope to put my personal position to good use. I am a church historian and will therefore endeavour to make use of this discipline for my topic, and as an Evangelical I will present the issue from one Evangelical position.³ My Baptist ecclesiology will also shine through. Baptist churches want to be New Testament churches, basing their concept of the church directly on the Bible.⁴

Concerning the role of women in the church, a frequent approach is to search in the New Testament texts, and to relate them to the current issues as seen by the expositor. The legal frame gained in this way is almost exclusively a restrictive one for women in the church (or even in life as a whole). Once that legal foundation is established, those biblical verses which do not fit the restrictive frame can be overlooked or dealt with in some way.

This approach has several problems: (1) it is an approach in systematic theology, but the texts used like 1 Cor 14:34 ("women must remain silent in the churches") and 2 Tim 2:12 ("I do not permit a woman to teach") may belong far more to practical theology, and Gal 3:28, the one text which is clearly a systematic statement, does not warrant any restrictions at all on women ("There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus").⁵ (2) This approach violates the Evangelical principle of Bible exposition, which demands that the *whole biblical evidence* be taken into account before coming to conclusions for today's behaviour, be it in church or outside. (3) This restrictive role

² It is not only controversial in Malawi. In my German church, of which I am still a minister though not currently a member, the Bund Evangelisch-Freikirchlicher Gemeinden (Baptist/Brethren Convention of Germany), many churches ordain women while others even forbid them to pray audibly in the presence of men.

³ My understanding is not the only Evangelical understanding available on this issue, but it definitely is one.

⁴ Compare this for example to the Anglican view which sees the New Testament Church as the seed from which the tree was to grow.

⁵ This verse can be disposed of by relegating its injunctions of female/male equality to the realm of the spiritual. But that attempt was not successful for "neither slave nor free." For a recent discussion on gender in the Bible, see Hilary Mijoga, "Gender Differentiation in the Bible: Created and Recognized," *Journal of Humanities* no. 13 (1999), pp. 87-113; *reprinted as: Hilary Mijoga, "Gender Differentiation in the Bible: Created and Recognized" in: Jonathan Nkhoma, *Significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls and other Essays. Biblical and Early Christianity Studies from Malawi*, Mzuzu: Mzuni Press, 2013, pp. 176-198.

ascribed to women cannot be easily reconciled with Jesus' teaching and practice. Why then did he appear to women first after the resurrection?

I propose to use a different approach. As a historian I will look at the historical evidence about women's role in the primitive church as provided in the Bible, concentrating on Paul, who has sometimes been declared an "enemy of women." Once the historical evidence is assembled and assessed, I will relate it to those verses which belong to the realm of practical theology. To give prominence to the historical evidence is very much justified on Baptist (and largely also on evangelical) principles since they take the primitive church not only as the beginning, but also as the yardstick.⁶ After that I want to relate the results to the systematic statement in Gal 3:28 and to current reality. In using this approach I was informed by a number of Evangelical missiologists of the second half of the 19th Century.

In discussing the biblical evidence I follow the Evangelical approach to take all letters ascribed to Paul as having been written by him,⁷ that the book of Acts accurately records history,⁸ and that interference with the original text by later interpolators is most unlikely.⁹

Romans 16: How Paul appreciated women's ministry

This chapter is seen by many Bible readers as dull, containing names, names, names and greetings. But to the student of the primitive church it is a highly revealing chapter, and for those who follow Baptist ecclesiological premises it may even have some normative value.

⁶ There is an interesting parallel to this attitude in Jesus' application of the creation story to current issues of marriage and divorce (Mat 19:4, "Haven't you read that at the beginning the Creator made them male and female..."). On the Genesis story, see Janet Y. Kholowa and Klaus Fiedler, *In the Beginning God Created them Equal* (English Version), and *Pa Chiyambi Anawalenga Chimodzimodzi* (Chichewa original), Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1999).

⁷ This rules out the interpretation that, after all, Paul did not support the injunctions on female behaviour in 1 Timothy.

⁸ This rules out the view that the book of Acts does not reflect the reality of the primitive church, but just Luke's theology. *For a discussion of the Book of Acts as an ancient historiography, see Jonathan Nkhoma, *Significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls and other Essays. Biblical and Early Christianity Studies from Malawi*, Mzuzu: Mzuni Press, 2013, pp. 112-122 [111-121].

⁹ This rules out the possibility of getting rid of the difficult text in 1 Corinthians 14 by seeing it as a later interpolation.

It is first of all evident that Paul acknowledges women's role in general. Of the 26 persons he greets directly, 10 are women. This is definitely more than courtesy in writing a letter. Some of the women are just mentioned (Julia, v. 15) or mentioned in relation to a male person (Nereus and his sister, v. 15). Two women (Rufus' mother, v. 13; Phoebe, v. 2) are mentioned in a typical female role ("who has been a mother to me, too"¹⁰ and who "has been a great help¹¹ to many, including me").¹² The other women are mentioned in not obviously female roles: one had risked her life for him (Prisca, v. 3), another was in prison with him (Junias, v. 7), and the others are mentioned as "workers."

Paul acknowledges women as fellow missionaries

The most important of his female co-workers may have been Priscilla. Here, as often, Paul calls her with her shortened name, Prisca, and mentions her before her husband, to whom he accords the same title, "my fellow worker in Christ Jesus" (v. 3) (*synergous mou en Xristo lesou*). The term is applied in the same chapter to Timothy (v. 21, *synergos mou*). It must have a strong meaning, since Timothy may be seen as the most prominent of Paul's fellow missionaries.

For other women's contribution, Paul uses verbal forms: Mary¹³ "worked very hard for you" (*ekopiasen eis hymas*). The same is said in v. 12 of Tryphena and Tyrophosa¹⁴, but this time the object they worked hard for is Christ (*ekopiasen en kyriō*). The same is said of Persis (v. 12).

The meaning of the word *kopian* is given as "work, work hard, labour; become tired, grow weary."¹⁵ Paul uses the word in 1 Cor 4:12 ("We work hard with our own hands"), 1 Cor 15:10 ("No, I worked harder than all of them"), 1 Cor 16:16 ("submit to ... who joins in the work and labours at it").

¹⁰ But even here it cannot be excluded that she was a spiritual mother.

¹¹ The Greek word here is *prostatis*, which may well have a connotation of strength. *Prostasso* means to command, to order.

¹² Here the possibility can also not be excluded that Phoebe helped Paul not by cooking his meals and running errands for him, but by preaching the Gospel and teaching the converts.

¹³ There is no evidence to suggest that this Mary is identical to other any Mary in the New Testament.

¹⁴ Their names suggest that they were sisters or even twins.

¹⁵ Barclay M. Newman, *A Concise Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament* (London: United Bible Societies, 1971).

Obviously, *kopian* refers for Paul primarily to spiritual work, so that he has to add "with our own hands" in 1 Cor. 4:12 (as in Eph 4:28), and the spiritual base meaning of the word is also seen in Paul's usage in Gal 4:11 ("I fear for you, that somehow I have wasted my efforts on you"), similar in Phil 2:16.¹⁶ It is obvious that Paul describes these women as doing spiritual work and as putting in a lot of effort. Sure, for Paul spiritual work may be very much down to earth (serving is seen as a spiritual gift), but if Paul had greeted (male) men in this way, we would have understood their hard work to include preaching, teaching and leadership, though not excluding serving at tables and cleaning up after a Gospel meeting. If that is so, there is no linguistic evidence in the text to treat female *men* (women) differently.

A case similar to Tryphena and Tryphosa is that of Euodia and Syntyche (Phi 4:2-3), only that Paul uses a different word to express that they were his co-workers, not that they worked hard, but that they "contended (*synēthlēsan*) at his side in the cause of the gospel," along with Clement and the rest of his fellow workers (*synergōn mou*). Here Paul obviously makes no differentiation between female and male co-workers, and as expositors we should not assume that the female co-workers did the serving and the male co-workers the leading.

In all cases, Paul does not speak of fellow missionaries, but of workers. But I think it is allowable to call them fellow missionaries since Paul saw himself first of all as a missionary. For most women he described as co-workers Paul gives no details, except for Junias.

Paul acknowledges a female deacon

If one reads Romans 16 carefully, the argument that the New Testament does not speak of women holding regular offices in the church, is not supported. Paul describes Phoebe as *diakonos tēs ekklēsiās tēs en Kegxreais*. The same word is used elsewhere in the New Testament for the deacons as office bearers of the church. This means that she was one, too. The word *diakonos* is of male gender, and as usual in Greek, that includes male and female persons.

Patriarchal bias is evident in many translations. The NIV, which tries to remain close to the Greek original, makes her to be a servant, and in a footnote says "or deaconess." The Greek text, though, gives no hint that her

¹⁶ Paul also uses *kopian* are: 1 Thess 5:12; 1 Tim 4:10; 5:17; 2 Tim 2:6.

office was a female one, and if one translates the word as "deaconess," many readers will see the office as something specifically female.¹⁷

The current Chichewa version (*Buku Lopatulika*) uses the same approach, making Phoebe a *mtumiki wamkazi*, whereas in 1 Tim 3:8 the word is simply translated as *atumiki*. The more recent and transitory translation of the New Testament (*Chipangano Chatsopano*) corrects this to a straight *mtumiki*, and this is the text for the new version (*Buku Loyera*).

The German version which is seen to be closest to the original text, the *Elberfelder*, was translated within the Brethren Movement, which restricts women's role to full silence in the presence of men in the church. This version takes account of the fact that in Romans 12 and 1 Timothy 3 the same word is used, and being less clerical than other translations does not use the word: deacon (*Diakon*), but the original servant (*Diener*) in both cases. But its bias still shows in translation: Phoebe is not *Diener*, but *Dienerin*, and she gets no footnote, while in 1 Timothy 3 a footnote tells the readers that the Greek really is "*Diakonen*" (deacons).

The list of biased translations could be extended.¹⁸ However, if one reads the text without a bias, Paul just speaks of deacons, be they female or male. Or he just speaks of servants, be they male or female. There is no justification to translate the same word differently in any case, unless there is a very good reason for doing so, and this I cannot find.

Paul acknowledges a female teacher of theology

If Paul was ever of the opinion that women must not teach, then he had not yet developed this view when he wrote Romans. Because Prisca (or more officially Priscilla) had been doing just that: of her we read in Acts 18:26:

When Priscilla and Aquila heard him [Apollos], they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately.

Do we imagine that Luke wants to tell us that Aquila did all the teaching and Priscilla cooked *nsima* and *ndiwo*, and that Priscilla sat silently at the men's

¹⁷ This is made easier by the fact that in Britain there developed a group of deaconesses in the last century, and in Germany the Diakonissen were a strong element in many Protestant churches, and many of them are there, still. Their motto was "my privilege is to serve," and most were trained and worked as nurses. All these do not equate with the position of deacon in the church.

¹⁸ Like in the Swahili Union Version, where Fibi is *mhudumu* (servant), while the men in 1 Timothy 3 are *mashemasi*, which is a technical term describing an office.

feet during whatever spare time she could find in between cooking meals? The text does not say that, and after all, Priscilla is mentioned first.¹⁹

She seems to have been a successful teacher. She became a great theologian and preacher, at least in Paul's opinion.

Paul acknowledges a female apostle

One of his more detailed comments Paul reserves for Andronicus and Junias, his co-workers who had suffered with him. Then he tells the Roman church that they were "outstanding among the apostles," not easy to deal with if you do not like women apostles.

Translators and commentators found a number of ways round. The bold-est were those who changed Junias into Junios, thus making her a (male) man. But for this there is only the faintest textual evidence, and in all secular literature available, Junias is always female.

The other solution is to understand "among the apostles" as meaning "in the opinion of the apostles." "The apostles" are then constituted as "The Twelve," a formally constituted body of a limited number of apostles. That is how readers often understand it today, but there is no real evidence that Paul did so, too. He understood himself to be an apostle (no. 13?), and other apostles are mentioned, like Barnabas. Paul also speaks of the church as being built on the "foundation of the apostles and prophets" (Eph 2:20). The fact that Paul mentions the apostles first makes it unlikely that the prophets are the Old Testament prophets and the apostles just the Twelve. There seems to be no problem for Paul to see Junias among the apostles.

In this he is not alone; the famous preacher Chrysostomos shared that view. He wrote: "What great an honour must this woman have received to be called an apostle."²⁰ Chrysostomos was living in a patriarchal society, presiding over a diocese in a patriarchal church. Still he did not mind.

¹⁹ A way to get round Priscilla's theological teaching is to make her "*kukambirana*," to discuss informally, or to state that she did the teaching under her husband's authority.

²⁰ John Chrysostomos, *Homilies on the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistle to the Romans*, Philip Schaff (ed), Edinburgh: T&T Clark; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, nd [1889], available as free download: NPNF1-11.

Paul acknowledges women prophets

There is no clearly defined structure of the churches in the New Testament, and as far as these structures are visible, they differ from place to place and from book to book. But it is clear that prophets played a major role in the early church. In Peter's first sermon, women prophets were included:

Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy (Acts 2:17-18 NIV).

Paul obviously assumes the same Spirit's gender insensitivity in 1 Cor 11:5. There he regulates how women prophets shall behave when delivering their message,²¹ but does not question their right to public delivery.

The office of prophets is also mentioned in connection to Paul on his last journey to Jerusalem. At Caesarea the travelling company of missionaries stayed at the house of the Evangelist and Deacon Philip, who "had four unmarried daughters who prophesied" (Acts 21:9). If Paul had been unhappy to meet them, I think we can safely assume that Luke would not have recorded their presence in the way he did.

What about a woman church elder?

Paul may well have spoken of women deacons in 1 Tim 3:8,²² but there is no evidence in the few words of his that have been preserved that he ever spoke of women elders. But how would he have spoken of Lydia? Just as his first convert and then hostess? I think he would also have considered her a church elder, if the nascent structures of that church had allowed such an office. The church met in her house, and when Paul and Silas had been freed from prison, they went to Lydia's house to discuss things with the brethren (a term that in Greek includes the sisters). Nothing detailed is said

²¹ What exactly his regulations were is today open to mutually exclusive interpretations: Either he demanded that they cover their heads or he demanded that no women should be bothered about covering her head or not. For a detailed study see: Thomas Schirrmacher, *Paul in Conflict with the Veil. An Alternative Interpretation of 1 Corinthians 11:2-16*, Nürnberg: VTR, ²2007.

²² The translation "their wives" seems to be a translators' view. The Greek text's simple "gynaikas hosautos" may well mean women deacons, which the NIV footnote acknowledges by offering "deaconesses" as an alternative translation to "their wives."

about Lydia's role, but if she had been a (male) man, I think she would be considered to have been the leading ruling elder of Philippi Church.

Evangelical discoveries

Most of the points described so far were discovered by Evangelical missiologists in the 19th century. They were probably not the first to do so (as the case of Chrysostomos shows), but it is important that they made the discoveries at a time when the women's lib movement was still future. These discoveries and the conclusions drawn from them can therefore not be understood as a compromise with modern social developments. These discoveries were made in the context of evangelism, mission, the quest for scriptural holiness. These were the main emphases of the great revival, which some call "The Second Evangelical Awakening" and which I prefer to call the "Holiness Revival," which started in America in 1858 and reaching Britain in 1859. As usual in revivals, the Holy Spirit blurred the distinctions between laity and clergy, between classes and races, and between male and female. So estate owners would pray together with their servants, black Americans would be accepted as missionaries, laymen would preach and lead, and women would take up positions of influence at home and (even more so) on the mission field.

The "Holiness Revival" provided a fertile ground for new discoveries in ministry and biblical studies, since one of its major roots was in the Holiness Movement, which in turn had its roots in the Methodist Movement. The Holiness Movement's origin can be attributed to two sisters, Phoebe Palmer and Sarah Lankford (1835), and ever since these original days, women played a major role in the Holiness Movement. But even John Wesley treated women very much differently from how he should have treated them being the Anglican clergyman that he was.²³

The central concern of the Holiness Revival was conversion, and therefore evangelism (home) and missions (foreign) were of top importance. If salvation is needed by everyone, then missions become paramount, the faster the better, the more effective the more beautiful.

Revival usually enhances the role of women, and many felt the call to missionary work (at home and abroad), and many of the leading men were very happy to observe this development, and some published their

²³ Paul Wesley Chilcote, *John Wesley and the Women Preachers of early Methodism*, PhD, Duke University, 1984 (Ann Arbor: UMI). This dissertation deserves much more attention than it has received so far.

thoughts and observations. Still, the first to publicly demand for women the right to preach, was a woman (though she had no intention to preach herself): Catherine Booth. She wrote to defend Phoebe Palmer's activities in Britain.²⁴ Among the men connected to the faith missions within the Holiness Revival it was perhaps the American Fredrik Franson (of Swedish origin who published in German) the most elaborate early male defence of women's rights to preach.²⁵ And the first Free Methodist Bishop wrote the most far-reaching book, demanding that women even should be ordained.²⁶

All these publications were missiological texts, with the aim that salvation should be brought to as many people worldwide as possible. To me this is an approach very congenial to Paul, because he was first and foremost a missionary, trying to reach the unreached, even in Spain.

The early Evangelical missiologists and expositors used the historical approach to the biblical evidence. Though most of them were not Baptists nor of similar faith, all of them had a very close and direct relationship to the Bible which allowed them, despite their official denominational allegiance, to ascribe to what they found in the New Testament a normative character, at least to the extent that all that was obviously practiced in the primitive church cannot be forbidden to today's church.

This was summed up by Titus Roberts, the first Bishop of the Free Methodist Church:

Though Christianity has greatly ameliorated the condition of women, it has not secured for her, even in the most enlightened nations, that equality which the Gospel inculcates ... The dominion which God gave to man at the creation was a joint dominion. It was given to the woman equally as to the man. God created woman a female man—nothing more—nothing less. She had all the rights and prerogatives of the man ... In the New Testament church, woman, as well as man, fitted the office of Apostle, Prophet, Deacon or Preacher and Pastor. There is not the slightest evidence that the functions of any of these offices, when filled by a woman, were different from what they were when filled by a man.

²⁴ Catherine Booth, *Female Ministry; or, Woman's Right to Preach the Gospel*, London, 1859.

²⁵ Fredrik Franson, *Weissagende Töchter*, Emden 1890, also *Gemeinschaftsblatt [Emden]* no 16 and 17, 1890.

²⁶ Benjamin Titus Roberts, *Ordaining Women* (Earnest Christian Publication House, 1891, reprinted by Light and Life Press in 1992, second reprint by Light and Life Communications, Indianapolis, 1997).

If woman, in using her voice, in praising God, or declaring His truth in our churches, is a transgressor, then silence her at whatever cost. If she is doing right, then remove all shackles and give her the liberty of the Gospel.

All restrictions to positions in the church based on race have been abolished; it is time then that those based on sex were also abolished ... Men had better busy themselves in building up the temple of God, instead of employing their time in pushing from the scaffold their sisters, who are both able and willing to work with them side by side.²⁷

In the New Testament they found that women played such important roles, and even the study of the Old Testament confirmed this. Sure, God used men more frequently than women, but women had also been God's ministers: Miriam was a prophet, and so was Huldah. Both had male prophets around them: Moses and Jeremiah, and God called them nevertheless. Deborah likewise, she judged Israel for many years and won a military victory, while Barrack was allowed to help her a bit in that specialized effort.²⁸

They also discovered that the "beautiful feet of those who bring good news on the mountains" belonged to women (Isa 52:7) and that the Old Testament part of salvation history came to an end with a woman prophet by the name of Anna.²⁹

Paul's "practical theology" texts about women's role

Having discovered all this, they concluded that women should preach the gospel and that women (married or single) must be missionaries in their own right. But with their deep love for and personal direct relationship to

²⁷ Benjamin Titus Roberts, *Ordaining Women* (Earnest Christian Publication House, 1891, reprinted by Light and Life Press in 1992, second reprint by Light and Life Communications, Indianapolis, 1997), p. 10.

²⁸ *For thorough studies of the Biblical evidence see: Stanley Chipeta, *An Examination of the Influence of Selected Pauline Texts on the Role of Women in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Malawi*, MA, Mzuzu University, 2014 and Frank Chirwa, *A Critical Examination of the Changing Role of Women in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Malawi: A Historical, Theological and Socio-Cultural Analysis*, PhD, Mzuzu University, 2014.

²⁹ She seems to have had her own congregation: "She gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Israel" (Luke 2:38).

the Bible they had to find an answer to the two seemingly prohibitive texts in Paul's practical theology: Let women be quiet in church and don't allow them to teach.³⁰

Evangelical understandings

Fredrick Franson's answer is very clear and stands for many similar answers: The evidence for women's preaching etc is so clear, that the two texts must have another explanation. If we are not sure what this explanation is, we can be assured though, that they do not mean what they are widely supposed to mean, namely, that women should shut up. Maybe they were just local admonitions to solve local problems.

Another way used in the Holiness Movement to relate the historical evidence to the "different" Pauline injunctions is found in a theology of the Holy Spirit as a missionary spirit. Is it not God's aim that as many people as possible should find Christ and be saved? If the New Testament evidence shows clearly that God used women to achieve just that, the two difficult verses cannot be given a meaning clearly contradicting the main thrust of the Gospel.

This line of argument is supported by a line of reasoning based on the obvious activity of the Holy Spirit. As history has shown, it is not always easy to identify certain historical events as God's action,³¹ but one thing is certain: the conversion of sinners.³² In the Holiness Movement there were many women evangelists, and had God not blessed their work with spiritual fruit? If that was the case, a few isolated verses of Scripture cannot have been designed to stop that. Salvation, and therefore conversion, is the guiding principle of theological reflection, not the doubtful exposition of a few New Testament references.

The roots of this view go back at least to John Wesley. In his early years, even after he had been revived in his faith, he forbade women to speak in the Methodist meetings. But since it was revival time, the women did not

³⁰ * See also the booklet: Janet Kholowa and Klaus Fiedler, *Mtumwi Paulo ndi Udindo wa Amayi mu Mpingo*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2001.

³¹ In Germany, for example, many Christians, Evangelicals included, saw the coming to power of Adolf Hitler in 1933 as a divine intervention to save the German nation (*Volk*) from Bolshevism, international (Jewish) capitalism and moral decline.

³² There will be joy in heaven even for one sinner converted, how much more joy will there be if many sinners are converted!

really heed his injunction, and Wesley did not mind that much, either. He soon observed that some women did a good job as witnesses, and even as preachers. Then he did not stop them any longer, and finally he fully supported them. When he was asked how he could do that, he answered: "If God owns them in the conversion of sinners, who am I to hinder Him?"³³

Wesley's allusion to Peter's words explaining his motivation for the theological decision to admit Gentiles to the Christian Church directly through baptism and not as the Old Testament prescribed through circumcision (and proselyte baptism, and keeping the law of Moses) is a good summary of thought frequent in the Holiness Movement. Peter answered his ("conservative") critics:

So if God gave the same gift as he gave us, who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could oppose God? (Acts 11:17)

This way of reasoning was echoed by Amaro, a leading elder in the Evangelical Church of Guinea Bissau, the leading Protestant denomination in that country, founded by a woman. When I asked him about women preaching, he replied: "Maybe from the Bible that is not right." And then he added after a little hesitation: "But had it not been for a woman preaching, I would not have been saved."³⁴ From this the conclusion can be drawn that it is better to be saved by a woman preaching than being lost for eternity for a man not preaching.³⁵

All these arguments find support in the basic Evangelical tenet that the whole testimony of Scripture must be used in any decision making process, and that any decision based on isolated verses may sound legally convincing, but even if it did so, it would not be true to the real evidence of Scripture nor to the reality of the Holy Spirit working for the conversion of sinners.

Galatians 3:28

If one follows the foregoing reasoning, Gal 3:28 falls easily into place. It is a statement made by Paul in a systematic context, and as such it must be accorded due prominence. The key to its interpretation may be the inclusion of slave and free. From the evidence of Paul's letters, it is clear

³³ Paul Wesley Chilcote, "John Wesley and the Women Preachers of early Methodism," PhD, Duke University, 1984 (Ann Arbor: UMI).

³⁴ *Int Elder Amaru, 5.8.1986.

³⁵ *Janet Kholowa and Klaus Fiedler, *Mtumwi Paulo ndi Udindo wa Amayi Mumpingo*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2001, p. 23.

that he accepted slavery, though he never commended it. In the great controversy over Christian slave holding, both sides appealed to Paul: The supporters to his real and realistic acceptance of slavery as a social institution, the opponents to his strong systematic statement. We know today that the opponents were right. Though a social reality, this reality cannot be seen as good and commendable and must therefore be challenged from the systematic statement of Paul.

The same reasoning should be applied to the statement that there is neither male nor female. There may be room for accepting existing social restrictions and for giving advice within that framework (like Paul may have done in 1 Corinthians and 1 Timothy), but general conclusions cannot be based on ancient pastoral adaptation to a given culture, but must be based on the authoritative (systematic) statements in scripture. In that process the unbiased study of the women's role in the early church in a historic way can help clarify what belongs to the systematic side of Paul's teaching and what belongs to the pastoral side. Just as much as slaves in their days were right in reading Gal 3:28 as a powerful critique of existing conditions, so women in the nineteenth century were and today are right in reading the same verse as a powerful critique of existing conditions in church and society. Though the early Evangelicals' fight for women's rights has now been overtaken by women's lib and other social movements, their insights can still be of quite some value for the church today.

Alternative interpretations: Evangelical type

So far I have assumed that there was and is agreement over the interpretation of the very meaning of the difficult Pauline passages, though the application may strongly differ. This is a simplified view, in fact there are for each of them Evangelical interpretations which yield results contrary to what is widely accepted. These would support Franson's contention that there must be interpretations other than the restrictive ones, interpretations that match with the New Testament's theology of missions.³⁶

Women must remain silent in the churches!

In traditional exegesis, 1 Cor 14:34 was often taken to mean that women must keep silent in church (*gynaiques en tais ekklēsiais sigatōsan*, in Latin the

³⁶ He did not provide any of these interpretations, but was convinced that they would exist.

famous: *Mulieres in Ecclesiis taceant*). Though this looks like a very general and therefore systematic statement, unbiased readers of the letter would soon see that the understanding that this verse forbids women to speak publicly in church is in conflict with Paul's own assumption of women publicly praying and prophesying recorded by Paul in 1 Cor 11:5.³⁷ Therefore the easiest explanation may be that Paul forbids women to "chatter" in church, an interpretation that gains strength from the fact that in the Jewish synagogues women would sit among themselves, and in Jewish synagogues there was a lot of chatting,³⁸ as some scholars argue, because not every part of the Jewish service needs the attention of everyone present.³⁹

A woman who prays or prophesies must cover her head

Most Bible translations assume that this was what Paul wanted the women in the church of Corinth to do: Cover their heads. But possibly Paul told them exactly the opposite. Doubts about current translations arise because the word *exousia* in 1 Cor 1:10 is understood to mean veil, headscarf or any other piece of fabric to be put on a woman's head.⁴⁰ But *exousia* elsewhere in the New Testament means authority and power.⁴¹ Jesus taught like one

³⁷ The nicest explanation I found to get around this is that Paul, knowing that the Corinthians were difficult Christians, did not dare to tell them immediately what his real opinion was, and that he finally gathered the necessary strength for that when he had reached chapter 14: "Women must keep quiet! Basi."

³⁸ From this seems to have developed the German expression: *Ihr macht einen Lärm wie in der Judenschule* ("You make a noise like in a Jewish synagogue").

³⁹ I well remember when I attended a marriage *mlandu* in a predominantly Muslim village in Southern Tanzania, the men were in charge and slightly in the majority, the women were sitting among themselves not exactly behind the men, but sideways, in a definitely subordinate place. Sometimes they talked among themselves, sometimes they went off with a child. Sometimes they contributed to (or interfered with) the proceedings, and sometimes the men even asked them for their opinion. Maybe there was some similarity between what I observed in that village and the proceedings in a house church in Corinth?

⁴⁰ *An example here is the new translation into Chichewa, *Buku Loyera*: Using the so called "Dynamic Equivalent Approach," they translate *exousia* as "=#

⁴¹ The NIV tries to take account of this by making women "have a sign of authority on her head." The Swahili Union Version makes it very clear that the authority is not her's but over her: "*Kwa hiyo imampasa mwanamke awe na dalili ya kumilikiwa kichwani, kwa ajili ya malaika*" (Therefore a women must have a sign of being ruled on her head, because of the angels) [1 Cor 11:10].

having power (Mat 7:29) and he had authority on earth to forgive sins (Mat 9:6), and he gave his disciples authority to drive out evil spirits (Mat 10:1). The Jewish elders questioned Jesus by what authority he did what he did (Mat 11:23), and Jesus gives all who believe in him the authority to become children of God (John 1:12). In none of these verses has *exousia* been translated as "sign of authority," but just as authority. Why not translate in the same way when a woman is involved: "Therefore the woman ought to have authority over her head," and therefore she can wear a hat, a turban, cut the hair short, curl it or straighten it, add braids to it or let it grow to her waist or tie it into a knot as my mother used to do. This interpretation fits well to what we know for sure about Paul: He appreciated highly the women's work for the Gospel.

If this was Paul's view, how do we reconcile earlier statements of his which seem to demand female submission, compulsory head cover etc? An answer would be a quotation. If Paul gave the direction that women should be left alone as far as head dress is concerned, the opposing view could be quoted from the letter which he received and in which these questions were asked. Then Paul's own words would be vv. 2-3 and 10-16, and vv. 4-9 would be opinions he quotes and disapproves of.⁴² Neither Schirrmacher nor I see this as the ultimate answer, with no queries permitted. But it is definitely a possible interpretation, with maybe less loose ends than other more common interpretations. The Evangelical missiologists did not foresee such a possible interpretation, but they made room in their theology where such an interpretation could find its place.

I do not allow a woman to teach!

This verse obviously conflicts with what we otherwise know about Paul. Did he change his mind as he grew older? Had women teachers disappointed him? Interesting thoughts, but speculations at best. Or maybe the author was not Paul? This is a view Evangelicals do not share. One way to understand that passage is that Paul, out of pastoral concern, gave instructions for a local church, which, though important at that time, may not be so for us today.

⁴² For a detailed discussion of this possibility including a review of exegetical literature on this issue see, Thomas Schirrmacher, *Paulus im Kampf gegen den Schleier. Eine alternative Auslegung von 1. Korinther 11,2-16*, Bonn: VKW, 1993. *For the English translation see: Thomas Schirrmacher, *Paul in Conflict with the Veil. An Alternative Interpretation of 1 Corinthians 11:2-16*, Bonn: VTR, 2007.

There was also the assumption that some local problem, the details of which we cannot know today, caused Paul to advise as he did. Now some more details have been put to this thought. The key is the Greek word *authenthein* in 1 Tim 2:12, which is usually translated "to have authority over." Does not even the English word show that the translation is correct? But, wait a moment. A German dictionary gives "to act independently" as the root meaning, rule over as the secondary meaning. The problem is that it occurs only once in the New Testament, and a solid exegetical rule states that one has to be careful in such cases.

A check of secular literature shows that *authenthein* may mean: "To make sexual overtures." Then the text could read: "I do not want a woman to teach and to make sexual advances to men." When I read this interpretation for the first time, I thought that such an interpretation was quite crazy, why should Paul forbid what would never happen? But then I thought of the Book of Revelation, where Christ criticizes the church in Thyatira: "You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality" (Rev 2:20). This means that the church of Thyatira would provide an example of a woman teacher who made advances to men and taught so. And she was probably not alone, since the Nikolaites seem to have held and practiced similar views.

Important for interpretation is that they all had a place within the churches, and that Christ does not criticize "Jezebel" for teaching as a woman, but for combining that with explicit immorality.

It is difficult to prove that this understanding of Paul's injunction is the correct one, but the evidence seems to be strong that it is a possible interpretation. And therefore, if a text is open to such contradictory interpretations, today's church should not build a whole doctrine or practice on it.

Evangelical missiology and advances in scholarship

It is important to note that the early evangelical missiologists did not build their case for women preachers on such interpretations favourable to their cause. Their decisions were much more fundamental: (1) take the historical evidence as a yardstick for today; (2) give priority to the Holy Spirit's activity of converting sinners; (3) leave seemingly contradicting practical apostolic advice aside. It may have either been a restricted advice for those times or further clarification may one day be found. (The last sections were such possible clarifications).

Possible meaning for Malawi

I am aware that a good part of this chapter was written from a Western European Evangelical perspective, but I think it has something to offer even to Malawi. I see it as a contribution to the present efforts to redefine the possible limits of women's role in the churches in Malawi. Many Malawian Christians understand themselves as Evangelicals or share, without explicitly claiming the name, the same or very similar views. For them this chapter with its Evangelical assumptions can hopefully offer a way to increase participation of women in the life of the church without becoming unfaithful to Scripture and the Evangelical interpretation of it.

10 The Process of Religious Diversification in Malawi: A Reflection on Method and a First Attempt at a Synthesis¹ (2004)

Introduction

While processes of religious change have been studied so far mostly as change from one religion to another ("conversion"), it is also necessary to study the processes of change within one religion ("diversification"), a development which is, due to its numerical preponderance, today probably more important in Malawi than conversion.

To change one's religion has been recognized—in most countries—as a fundamental human right, and for a religious historian of Africa it is fascinating to describe and analyze how by far the larger part of a continent changed its religion within a period of less than 200 years.²

This process of conversion from one religion (African Traditional Religion) to another (mostly, Christianity, but also Islam) has been the major focus of most religious historians. However, much less attention was devoted to the study of religious diversification within one religion. With an estimated current number of 600 Christian denominations in Malawi³ and perhaps ten different Muslim groupings, religious diversification offers opportunities which many Malawians are happy to make use of.

¹ First published in *Religion in Malawi* 11 (2004), pp. 18-24.

² For a controversial theory on this process see: Robin Horton, "African Conversion," *Africa* XLI, 2 (1971), pp. 85-108.

³ There exists no comprehensive list of churches in Malawi yet and no Handbook of Christian Churches. In 1980 J.C. Chakanza recorded well over 100 African Independent Churches (J.C. Chakanza, *An Annotated List of Independent Churches in Malawi 1900-1981*, Sources for the Study of Religion in Malawi, no. 3), in 1983 he added another 30 (Sources for the Study of Religion in Malawi, no 10), and their number has grown since then. In Blantyre and Limbe Ulf Strohbehn recorded 135 denominations of Pentecostal and Charismatic character only (Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches in Blantyre, MA module, University of Malawi, Department of TRS, 2000). Zomba alone has above 40 of the same description. Such pieces of information show that there is a strong growth rate in the number of denominations, and I would not be astonished if the total figure would pass 600.

Conversion and Diversification

As far as religious history can be pursued back in Malawi, this history was a history of religious change, and over the centuries, these processes of change included ever growing elements of diversification, when not just one religious expression replaced the previous one completely, but the former religious expression continued to exist, maybe in a modified way, side by side with the new one(s). This process of change leading to diversification applies to African Traditional Religion(s), to Islam, and to Christianity. Over the last 150 years or so, the majority of the adherents of African Traditional Religion has joined either Islam or Christianity, while there have been few conversions either way between Christianity and Islam.⁴

Parallel diversity

The changes from African Traditional Religion to a book religion often was and is at the same time a process of diversification, when people clearly belong to a new religion (Islam or Christianity), but also use aspects of the old religion.⁵ This can be observed on the broad level of assumptions and world views, for example when an untimely death is ascribed to human agency through witchcraft.⁶ On the more practical level this diversification may find

⁴ There has been much talk about the growth and even the threat of Islam in the wake of the Islamic Revival starting in the 1970s, which showed a major growth in Islamic institutions and a changed corporate self-perception, but not a numerical growth beyond population growth. There are a number of conversions either way, but not enough in numbers to influence the religious statistics of the nation in any major way. I estimate that there are about 15% Muslims in Malawi.

⁵ This aspect is often discussed under the term of syncretism, which I do not use because it carries often the connotation of a full and conscious mixing of two religions. Another term that is being used is bireligiosity (Bregje de Kok). This term seems to carry the connotation of two religions held equally by people. *I prefer to speak of dual religiosity, as done convincingly in: Joyce Mlenga, *An Investigation of Dual Religiosity between Christianity and African Traditional Religion among the Ngonde in Karonga District in Northern Malawi*, PhD, Mzuzu University, 2013.

⁶ When recently a lorry returning the dead body of a school boy at Masongola Secondary School to his home village in the Changalume area overturned when descending towards a river, killing nine passengers, the boy's uncle was blamed to have killed him, because he wanted him to sell sugar cane for him and not to go to school. The accident was seen as further revenge, not as a problem of either the

its expression in Christians resorting to divination to find out the cause of an illness or of a series of deaths.⁷ On the institutional level this kind of parallel diversification shows in the fact that in these days most of the cult officials at the traditional rain shrines are either Christians or Muslims.⁸ Another phenomenon of this parallel diversification is the emergence of a new type of traditional Christian healers, who understand themselves very clearly to be Christians, but who make use of many healing practices common in African Traditional Religion.⁹

Religious diversification in Islam

Islam is divided into two major confessions, Sunni and Shia, with the Shia being subdivided into a number of denominations (using Christian terminology). All Muslims in Malawi are Sunni, and there are no clearly

driver, the breaks or the road. Most probably all the people involved in this story were members of a "book religion" (oral information, Rachel Banda).

⁷ In a family several of the grown up sons died over not a long period. The mother then decided to consult a diviner to find out who was responsible for these deaths. She ultimately did not consult a diviner because her eldest son called her and other family members together and informed them that he knew that all his brothers had died of AIDS, and that he would now break the secrecy (Information from NN, 29.1.2000).

⁸ For details on the Chisumphi shrine see Isabel Phiri, "African Traditional Women and Ecofeminism: the role of Women at Chisumphi cult in Preserving the Environment," *Religion in Malawi*, vol. 6 (1996), pp. 14-19. For the shrine of M'bona, see: Alinafe Kalembe, M'bona Cult and Mang'anja Chiefs of the Lower Shire: Their Relationship, Then and Now, University of Malawi, BA (Theology), 1997. For the shrine of Bimbi, which also has a number of Muslim cult officials, see James Amanze, *African Traditional Religions in Malawi. The Case of the Bimbi Cult*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2002.

⁹ An early exponent of this new brand of Christian healers may have been Chikanga. Though the major Protestant church of the area, CCAP Livingstonia Synod, strongly opposed him, he saw himself as a Christian healer. This is brought out clearly in Boston Soko, *Chikanga. The Battle against Witchcraft in Malawi*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2002. A similar view could be held of Chisupe, a member of African Baptist Assembly (PIM), though he claimed not to be a regular *sing'anga*, having been revealed only one medicine for one illness (AIDS) for both treatment and immunization. *For traditional healers who understand themselves to be Christians see Chimwemwe Katumbi, *The Interaction between Christianity and Traditional Medicine in the Livingstonia Synod*, MA, University of Malawi, 2003.

defined denominations in the Sunni community.¹⁰ This does not mean that there is no diversity, though under different structures, which were brought by the introduction of Islamic brotherhoods (tariqa) into the Muslim Yao heartland.¹¹ Presently there is often tension between Qadiriya and Sukuti.¹² Another line of diversity is the differentiation between the traditional Yao leaders and their mosques and the new men, who want a version of Islam much closer to the Quran (and less diversified). But on the whole, Islam is much less diverse in Malawi than Christianity, whose diversity is the major emphasis of this chapter.

Christian diversification

Christian diversification is a reality in almost all parts of the world, and in Africa south of the Sahara even more than in other continents. In any attempt to assess and even to describe this phenomenon, I must state my presuppositions clearly. Most descriptions and assessments of this diversity in Africa assume a top down approach which sees the existing (and growing) Christian diversity as a shortfall against the ideal of Christian unity.¹³ Contrary to this (somewhat authoritarian) top down approach to Christian unity and diversity, I employ an approach from below, based on the observation that for the majority of ordinary church members diversity is a desirable thing, is the option of the grassroots.¹⁴ I will therefore come up with a positive (though not necessarily uncritical) evaluation of the diversification process, which has a long history in Malawi.

¹⁰ In Malawi, different from East Africa, the Asian Muslims are all Sunni. That they belong to a different school of law (Hanafi) does not mean a major differentiation in practice.

¹¹ For details see: Alan Thorold, "The Yao Tariqa and the Sukuti Movement," David S. Bone (ed), *Malawi's Muslims: Historical Perspectives*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2000.

¹² *Ian Dicks made a detailed survey of the distribution of mosques in one Yao area and came to the conclusion that the number of Sukuti adherents in that area may be estimated at about 5% (Ian Dicks, *An African Worldview. The Muslim Amacinga Yawo of Southern Malaŵi*, Zomba: Kachere, 2012, pp. 495-497).

¹³ A problem with this approach is often that it was right for Zwingli to break away from the Roman Catholic Church, but that it is not right to break away from Zwingli's or Calvin's Reformed or Presbyterian Church today (Louise Pirouet).

¹⁴ I use this term alluding to the situation in Latin America where the Roman Catholic church decided to take up an option for the poor, when, at the same time, a larger number of the poor opted for the (quite diverse) Pentecostal churches.

Comity

The Christian church in Malawi started with a clear concept of unity without much diversity. When the Scottish missions of the Free Presbyterian Church (Livingstonia) and of the Presbyterian Church (Blantyre) started their work in Malawi in 1875 and 1876, they saw the territory of what was to become Malawi as broadly occupied by missionary forces and themselves as working together in comity.¹⁵ In the language of the diplomats comity means "proper, friendly, appropriate behaviour to each other." In missionary terminology it means that several Christian churches work in separate areas ("spheres of interest") and, without agreeing in doctrine or ecclesiology, accept each other's work as genuine work of the Christian church. For Malawians it means that their religious freedom would be limited, they could choose to become Christian (conversion), but had no choice between Christian denominations (diversification). The rationale behind the concept of comity was that the Christians of the young churches should not be burdened with the historical divisions of the church in Europe.¹⁶ Though the missions would not necessarily agree on doctrine and practice, they would recognize each other's membership,¹⁷ and though they would not unite (because for them the historic divisions of Europe were so important), they would cooperate in producing the same hymn book or bible translation, and have occasional common missionary conferences.¹⁸

When the two Presbyterian missions had occupied the land, their concept of comity left some room for other missions. They would surely respect the return of the UMCA to the Lake, and Livingstonia Mission welcomed the Dutch Reformed Mission from the Cape Province (who were very similar in doctrine) to share in the work. There was even some willingness to accept another mission at the fringes of one's territory, when such fringes could

¹⁵ For an extend discussion of comity see: Klaus Fiedler, *The Story of the Faith Missions. From Hudson Taylor to Present Day Africa*, Oxford et al: Regnum, 1995, pp. 188-192.

¹⁶ This was a paternalistic concept, well intended, of course, for the good of the children, who were not asked if they felt it to be good for them.

¹⁷ A Christian moving about the country would be a Presbyterian in his birth place, a Free Presbyterian while attending Overtoun Institution, and become an Anglican on appointment to government service on Likoma Island.

¹⁸ These missionary conferences developed over the years into what is now the Christian Council of Malawi. Sometimes there were also native conferences. For one such conference see: Kenneth R. Ross (ed), *Christianity in Malawi. A Source Book*, Gweru: Mambo-Kachere, 1996, pp. 91-96.

not be occupied properly,¹⁹ but already the expansion of UMCA to (unoccupied areas of) the Western lakeshore was greeted with doubts and the UMCA climbing up the mountains to Ntcheu was greeted with outright disapproval.²⁰ Even more disapproval was meted out to Joseph Booth, when he started Zambezi Industrial Mission²¹ and Nyasa Industrial Mission,²² both in the vicinity of Blantyre Mission. The effectiveness of comity on the missionary level was of course limited, since the Roman Catholic Church never accepted any comity rules, and other missions after 1892 were not keen on that either, but lasting effects there are, visible for example in the rigid territorial definitions of the five member synods of the Church of Central African Presbyterian.²³

From the missionary side comity was not an unqualified success, but a reasonable working tool. The concept of comity is a somewhat authoritarian concept, valuable for those in power, and therefore it was shared by much of the Malawian church leadership, at least in the main line churches. Ordinary Malawian Christians, though, often saw the concept of comity as restrictive or even repressive. Why should a Presbyterian suddenly be turned into an Anglican by moving to Likoma? Or why should an Anglican become a Presbyterian when moving to Liwonde?²⁴ And even when not moving at all, why should a Christian be restricted to the limited educational system of her church when another one would offer her

¹⁹ Blantyre Mission had no big problems to accept the entry of the South Africa General Mission into the Lower Shire.

²⁰ John McCracken, *Politics and Christianity in Malawi*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2000, pp. 159, 207.

²¹ 1892 at Mitsidi, now part of the Sanjika palace grounds.

²² 1893 at Likhubula, where there is now the Evangelical Bible College of Malawi (formerly Likhubula Bible Institute), the pastoral training college of a number of Evangelical churches.

²³ Currently there is a serious dispute between Livingstonia Synod and Nkhoma Synod over the allegiance of congregations in Dwangwa Estate, in which the General Synod is in difficulties to mediate. *By now (2014) mediation has had no success, and Livingstonia Synod has established congregations all over the territory of Nkhoma Synod, the Central Region. See: Samson Kaonga, *A History of the Birth and Growth of Livingstonia Synod's Congregation in Kasungu District in the Context of the Border Dispute with Nkhoma Synod (2005-2012)*, BA, Mzuzu University, 2012.

²⁴ The concept of territorial comity was soon softened by allowing missions to "follow their members into the cities."

children a much better deal? And when someone was put under discipline in his church for breaking some rule, why not be a Christian in another church, where such a rigid rule does not apply?²⁵

These Evangelical churches provided many avenues of diversification for Malawian Christians, and a good number of them made use of these. When Booth established Mitsidi Mission, he attracted some qualified people who had been trained at Blantyre Mission. Even his first convert, John Chilembwe, though he had never been baptized by Blantyre Mission, had received his education from them.²⁶ The most prominent person to take advantage of the possibilities the new Evangelical missions offered was Charles Domingo, who had been fully trained for the ministry by Livingstonia Mission, but had been waiting for years for ordination.²⁷ In addition to these prominent names there must have been quite some crossing over or increased choice for ordinary people, but research is needed to get their details.

Mission	Year	First Mission Station	Observations
Zambezi Industrial Mission	1892 (Joseph Booth)	Sanjika (Blantyre)	Strong work in Ntcheu area (unoccupied)
Nyasa Industrial Mission	1893 (Joseph Booth)	Likhubula (Blantyre)	Concentrated on work outside Blantyre, based on Ntambanyama
Baptist Industrial Mission	1896 (Joseph Booth)	Gowa	Since 1929 Church of Christ
Seventh Day Baptist Mission	1899 (Joseph Booth)	Malamulo	Sold to SDA, SDB work restarted in 1909 (Charles Domingo)
Providence Industrial Mission	1900 (John Chilembwe)	Mbombwe, Chiradzulu District	(Black) National Baptist convention of America, Inc.
South Africa General Mission	1900	Lulwe	In the extreme south fitting comity concepts. Later Africa

²⁵ This was in some cases (though by no means the majority) a reason to start or to join an "African Independent Church."

²⁶ George Shepperson and Thomas Price, *Independent African. John Chilembwe and the Origins, Setting and Significance of the Nyasaland Native Rising of 1915*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2000 (Edinburgh University Press 1958/1987), pp. 47f.

²⁷ Harry Langworthy, "Africa for the African." *The Life of Joseph Booth*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1996, pp. 224f.

			Evangelical Fellowship. Evangelical Church of Malawi
Seventh-day Adventist	1902 (Joseph Booth)	Malamulo (taken over from SDB)	Early black missionaries (Thomas and Henrietta Branch, Mabel Branch)
Churches of Christ	1909 (through Joseph Booth)	Namiwawa	

In spite of these prominent and less prominent people who took advantage of the Evangelical missions to increase diversity, they formed only a small group, because much of the missionary work of the Evangelical missions was done in unreached area, where there were no competing missions.²⁸ But even where there was another mission in reach, as was the case with Malamulo (SDA), most converts came from African Traditional Religion. Diversity was further limited by the fact that all the Evangelical missions grew slowly numerically in their early decades, and often also expanded slowly in terms of geography.²⁹

The Catholic alternative

The Protestant missions were left unchallenged in Malawi for a quarter of a century. They thought the territory to be theirs and were not pleased at all when Catholic missionaries, first Montfortians and the White Fathers, invaded their territory, but chief Justice Joseph Nunan, a British Catholic civil servant in Blantyre, insisted that religious freedom applied in her majesty's protectorate.³⁰ The Catholic could not get tribal land around Blantyre and thus bought a freehold farm at Nguludi (1901). The White

²⁸ Though Nyasa Industrial Mission started very close to Blantyre Mission, very soon it concentrated its work on Ntambanyama, and Zambezi Industrial Mission put much emphasis on the Ntcheu area.

²⁹ The Seventh-day Adventist established within the first 25 years only one mission besides Malamulo, namely Matandani in the unreached Neno area (1907). This happened on request of Mark Chakachadza, a student of that area who had attended Malamulo school and then started his own school back home (Yonah Matemba, *The History of Matandani Mission of Seventh-day Adventists, Neno, Malawi, 1908-1989*, MA, University of Malawi, 2000. *Published as Yonah Matemba, *Matandani. The Second Adventist Mission in Malawi*, Zomba: Kachere, 2003).

³⁰ Hubert Reijnaerts, Ann Nielsen, Matthew Schoffeleers, *Montfortians in Malawi: Their Spirituality and Pastoral Approach*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1997, pp. 17-23.

Fathers established their first mission in Mua, in an area not effectively reached by Protestants, but in territory claimed by them as theirs.

For the people around Mua, Christian diversity was not yet a choice in the early days. However, the coming of the Catholic missionaries generally increased greatly the people's options of diversity.³¹ This option was limited by government which imposed a kind of comity of its own, by demanding that the headman or chief must give permission for a school to be established (and he could choose only one) and by ruling that schools must be at least two (later three) miles away from each other. The Catholic missions challenged the Protestants in their complacency³² to a war of the schools, and in this war often got the better of them.³³ This can all be seen as mission competition (and that's what it was), but on the famous grass roots level the people liked it indeed, because for every new school there were eager customers, parents who were very happy to afford their children the opportunity to attend and to learn.

The African Independency alternative

Though the phenomenon of the so called African Independent churches has often been overestimated,³⁴ they still provide an important means for people to achieve diversity. Some of them (especially in the early decades) were started in direct opposition to white-led mission churches, others were more the results of independent initiative, and later many of them broke away from break away churches, without any missionary being involved. The only African Independent Church in the first decade of the

³¹ Catholic missions spread all over Malawi, reaching the North only in the late 1930s. Currently the Roman Catholic church is the largest single Christian denomination in Malawi.

³² Protestants would have objected to my use of this term, but they just expressed it in different words, like: "We look for quality Christians, not for numbers." But the people often looked for Christianity, not for "quality Christianity" controlled by others.

³³ Hubert Reijnaerts, Ann Nielsen, Matthew Schoffeleers, *Montfortians in Malawi: Their Spirituality and Pastoral Approach*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere 1997, pp. 178ff.

³⁴ It has been overestimated both in numbers and in importance. The African Independent Churches are not really "mushrooming" (my estimate is that they keep their share) nor are they the "vanguards of inculturation of the Christian message (Hilary Mijoga, *Separate but Same Gospel*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere 2000).

last century³⁵ was Elliot Kamwana's Watchtower Movement, which in 1909 attracted a tremendous following in Tongaland, because he offered instant baptism at a time when entry into Livingstonia Mission was a complicated and protracted affair.³⁶ The people who could not or would not match Livingstonia's "quality standards,"³⁷ welcomed the diversity Kamwana offered.³⁸

A second stage in the development of the African Independent alternative are the churches that broke away from Livingstonia, like the African Reformed Presbyterian Church (Yafet Mkandawire, 1932) and the Blackman's Church (Yesaya Zerenyi Mwasi, 1933³⁹) or the Ekleziya Lanangwa of Charles Chinula (1934).⁴⁰ These churches flourished somehow, but were often seen as second choice, in that the children joined CCAP,⁴¹ which, of course, had a full school system, which the African Independent Churches could not afford. Similar to the situation in Livingstonia are the splits from PIM (African Baptist Assembly), especially the Independent Baptist Church.

³⁵ I do not classify Providence Industrial Mission (African Baptist Assembly), Seventh-day Baptist, or Churches of Christ as African Independent churches, because they were and are all clearly mission related. But they gave much scope to African leadership. Cf. J.C. Chakanza, "The Independence Alternative: A Historical Survey," *Religion in Malawi* no. 4, pp. 32-42, especially p. 32f.

³⁶ For his career see: J.C. Chakanza, *Voices of Preachers in Protest: The Ministry of Two Malawian Prophets: Elliot Kamwana and Wilfrid Gudu*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1998, pp. 12-54. *For a Tonga view see: David Mphande, *Oral Literature and Moral Education among the Lakeside Tonga of Northern Malawi*, Mzuzu: Mzuni Press, 2014, pp. 115-123, 125, 130.

³⁷ Livingstonia Mission soon took a clue from Watchtower and about doubled the speed of admission into the church (Silas Ncozana, *The Spirit Dimension of African Christianity: A Pastoral Study among Tumbuka People in Northern Malawi*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere 2000).

³⁸ That the strong support he found was more than a passing moment's angry reaction to Livingstonia is shown by the fact that his movement survives until today.

³⁹ For his inaugural speech see: Yesaya Zerenyi Mwasi, *Essential and Paramount Reasons for Working Independently*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1999, pp. 15-29.

⁴⁰ J.C. Chakanza, *An Annotated List of Independent Churches in Malawi 1900-1981*, Zomba: University of Malawi, Sources for the Study of Religion in Malawi, no 10, 1983.

⁴¹ When I gave a lift to a granddaughter of Mwasi in Lilongwe, she told me that all his children belonged to CCAP.

Atchona churches

Another source of growing diversity in Malawi are the churches brought back to Malawi by migrant labourers. The earliest of these seems to be the African Methodist Episcopal Church (Hanock Msokela Phiri, 1923).⁴² More important today in numbers are the two oldest Pentecostal churches: the Assemblies of God (Lyton Kalambule, 1932, from South Africa)⁴³ and Apostolic Faith Mission (Robert Chinguo, 1933, also from South Africa).⁴⁴ Other early comers among the *atchona* churches are usually counted among the African Instituted Churches: Christian Catholic Apostolic Church in Zion (1923/1958) and the various types of Zionist churches.⁴⁵ These new churches represent a major process of diversification, but none of the *atchona* churches attracted major numbers up to about 1950. Assemblies of God and Apostolic Faith Mission attracted foreign missionaries later.⁴⁶

The phenomenon of the *atchona* churches is not confined to the time they were brought in by *atchona* (like with the Free Methodists, Amos Phiri),⁴⁷ but *atchona* played an important role in them (like Stephen Galatiya, Baptist Convention).⁴⁸

⁴² AMEC is usually taken to be an African Independent Church, but it is a mission related church, only that the mission is back. In South Africa at least, conflicts with (black) missionaries caused the formation of an African Independent Church from AMEC. *Recent research: Devlin Chirwa, *The History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Malawi: The Karonga Branch (1943 – 2000)*, BA, University of Malawi, 2003.

⁴³ *Enson Lwesya and Gregory Mvula, *The History of the Assemblies of God and Pentecostalism in Malawi. Spreading the Flames at Home and Abroad*, Limbe: Assemblies of God Literature Centre, 2005.

⁴⁴ *Ulf Strohhahn, *Pentecostalism in Malawi. A History of the Apostolic Faith Mission in Malawi 1931 – 1994*, Zomba: Kachere, 2005.

⁴⁵ *For a thorough study of the 30 Zionist Churches in Malawi see: Ulf Strohhahn, *The Zionist Churches in Malawi. History – Theology – Anthropology*, Mzuzu: Mzuni Press, 2015.

⁴⁶ See Klaus Fiedler, "The Charismatic and Pentecostal Movements in Malawi in Cultural Perspectives," *Religion in Malawi*, 9 (1999), pp. 28-38.

⁴⁷ *For the history see: Henry Church, *Theological Education that Makes a Difference. Church Growth in the Free Methodist Church in Malawi and Zimbabwe*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2002, pp. 16-71.

⁴⁸ *See Hany Longwe, *Christians by Grace – Baptists by Choice. A History of the Baptist Convention of Malawi*, Mzuzu: Mzuni Press, 2011, p. 37ff, 50.

New missions after the end of missions

When most African nations became independent in the 1960s, the classical mission churches went through a similar process, sometimes ahead of political independence, sometimes a bit later. In classical missiological thinking that meant the end of the "era of missions" and the beginning of the "era of the church." And that indeed happened in the Presbyterian and the Anglican churches (and more slowly in the Roman Catholic Church) and others, but at the same time new missions started to work and expand in Malawi. Some of them just came in from outside like the Southern Baptist Mission from Zimbabwe.⁴⁹ Others were brought in by *atchona*, like the Free Methodist Church,⁵⁰ and yet others were called in by Malawians, like the Lutheran Church of Central Africa.⁵¹ The common factor with all the "new churches" is that they satisfied a high local demand. This is not to deny foreign missionary involvement, but the causative factor is local demand, and the (limited) missionary presence⁵² is one factor that made these new missions more attractive to satisfy this demand.

Parallel, and in my assessment more important numerically, is the sudden and unforeseen growth of the older evangelical churches or at least of some of them. The most outstanding example is the Seventy-day Adventist Church, which experienced slow growth after an early start in 1902. It recovered after 1915, reached a plateau by 1950, and then started to grow considerably, slowing down in the 1960s and then picking up fast, so that by now the SDA Church had become the third largest denomination

⁴⁹ But even though, *atchona* played an important role in the early spread of the Baptist Convention of Malawi, the most famous being Stephen Galatiya, who had been a *mutchona* in South Africa (Hany Longwe, research notes on Baptist Convention of Malawi, computer file, 1999). The Church now has about 80,000(?) members.

⁵⁰ Through Amos Phiri, the church has now about 20000 full members (Henry Church, *The Impact of Theological Education Upon Church Growth in the Free Methodist church in Malawi*, PhD, University of Malawi 1999, *published as: Henry Church, *Theological Education that Makes a Difference. Church Growth in the Free Methodist Church in Malawi and Zimbabwe*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2002). *The numbers have declined in recent years. See Bernard Kalukusha, *The History of the Free Methodist Church in Malawi from 1969 to 2011*, MA, Mzuzu University, 2013.

⁵¹ Ernst Wendland, "A History of the Christian Church in Central Africa: The Lutheran Church of Central Africa 1953-1978," Mequon, Wisconsin: 1980.

⁵² In the Free Methodist Church in Malawi, there were never more than two missionary couples, usually one.

in Malawi with just above 300000 full members (2004), thus having passed the Anglican Church.⁵³

Similarly the two Pentecostal Churches, which had a slow *atchona* start in the 1930s and then one or a few missionaries, started to expand considerably, so that the Apostolic Faith Mission now has 200 congregations,⁵⁴ and the Assemblies of God Mission was targeting a membership of 500,000. At the same time other Pentecostal churches also experienced strong growth.

Evangelical ascendancy

This "late" growth of early "minor" mission churches, combined with the calling in or ready acceptance of new missions, produced a change in the overall composition of Malawian Christianity in that the Evangelical section has been growing considerably. There has been no religious census since 1931 and since current religious statistics are either outdated, imaginative or both, I have no way for a proper overall assessment. But if available detailed evidence is taken into account, the picture of growth of the evangelical sector of Christianity is clear.⁵⁵

This assessment is sometimes obscured by the fact that in Malawi most churches grow. The reason is high population growth of at least 3% per year,⁵⁶ and therefore a church whose percentage of the total Christian population does not change at all, will double its membership in about 17 years. And it means that a church which grows by 2% a year will still double in about 35 years, but lose a third of its percentage in the same time. Applied to religious diversification in Malawi this means that many evangelical churches are somewhat small but grow in terms of percentage,

⁵³ *For recent studies of the SDA Church in Malawi see: Macleard Banda, "The Remnant and its Mission." An Investigation into the Interaction of the Seventh-day Adventist Church with Society in Malawi, PhD, Mzuzu University, 2014; Frank Chirwa, A Critical Examination of the Changing Role of Women in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Malawi: A Historical, Theological and Socio-Cultural Analysis, PhD, Mzuzu University, 2014.

⁵⁴ Information, Ulf Strohhorn, 1999, PhD Module 2, 2000.

⁵⁵ My estimate puts the evangelical sector at 20% of total Christianity in Malawi.

⁵⁶ I use this received wisdom figure which seems to match real life, ignoring the 1998 National Census results which indicate a population decline, until such a time when the correctness of the census has been demonstrated. *The next census did not justify the assumptions of 1998.

and that the classical denominations are still very strong in numbers but declining in percentage.

No ascendancy of African Independent Churches

In scholarly assessment since the 1950s, the African Independent Churches were often seen as the most genuine expression of African Christianity, and they were seen as expanding rapidly. None of these assumptions is true for Malawi. The African Independent Churches (or at least most of them) are in no way vanguards of inculturation of the church into African culture,⁵⁷ and though there are practically no statistics, it is obvious that overall they are neither "mushrooming" nor "proliferating rapidly,"⁵⁸ though the number of denominations is indeed growing.⁵⁹

Diversification and conversion

While diversification is the dominant element, conversion still exists. Contrary to some public perception, Islam is growing in numbers but not in percentage. There are conversions between Islam and Christianity in both directions, but in total numbers too few to change the national percentages. Quite difficult to assess is the conversion rate from African Traditional Religions to Christianity, since there is no clear indication of how many adherents of African Traditional Religions are left.⁶⁰ My (gu)estimate

⁵⁷ Hilary Mijoga, *Separate but Same Gospel*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere 2000, analyzed 299 African Independent Church sermons and found that they were definitely not more "African" than main-line (mission) church sermons.

⁵⁸ J.C. Chakanza, *Annotated List of African Independent Churches*. Sources for the Study of Religious in Malawi no 3 (1980) has 143 denominations, some of which I would not categorize as African Independent Churches. Random researches found many other African Independent Churches, and Hilary Mijoga, *Separate but Same Gospel*, using sermons from 30 churches, included a number of churches that were not included by Chakanza before. Mijoga's churches are only from the wider Zomba area.

⁵⁹ The result of any estimate depends on the definition of adherence or membership. I take anyone to be a Christian or a Muslim or an adherent of African Traditional Religions who claims to be such, irrespective of whether the religion recognizes the person as such.

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is 5-10%. Since the traditionally Muslim areas have a small African Traditional remnant population and since there are no developments pointing to a revival of organized African Traditional Religions,⁶¹ it can be expected that the majority of the small African Traditional Religion remnant will join Christianity over the next two generations and this will probably not increase Christian diversification.

Evaluation

I take diversification as a sign of strong religiosity, and therefore basically as something good, whereas in much of current literature it has been taken as something detrimental both to Christian unity and mission. Diversification is the choice of the people, and the strong growth of the middle and upper class Charismatic churches proves that diversification is not only the "option of the poor."

We also have to discard the idea that the strong trend towards diversification is due to foreign agency.⁶² I do not overlook the fact that some foreigners are involved in this process, but the initiative is clearly and consistently Malawian.

We also have to be careful to avoid secondary explanations for religious diversification. Such general claims like "They become Pentecostals because they are socially dislocated" or "they join these churches because of rapid social change" (or urbanization) do not help.

The idea that the traditional "mark of the church" (*nota ecclesiae*) of oneness must be expressed in "organic" and increasingly centralized structures (councils, united churches etc) is not highly valued by Malawian Christians in general, but mutual respect and co-operation at various levels are.

The development of religious diversification thwarts all attempts to express unity through uniformity. Even under a government that held this view, the process of Christian diversification continued unabated.

The process of Christian diversification offers, under a different political dispensation, to be a useful contribution to the development of a democratic culture in which diversity is supportive of unity.

⁶¹ There are some such development in West Africa, and much stronger so among the black population of Latin America (Umbanda, Candomblé, Voodoo and others).

⁶² A strong proponent of this view is Paul Gifford.

In an intensely religious country like Malawi, the government does well to see religion as a partner. The government must be careful to select its Christian partners, though. It is no longer enough to consult the Episcopal Conference and the Christian Council, nor is it sufficient to just follow comprehensive sounding names of organizations.⁶³

Since Christian diversity is a strong Malawian achievement, it should be reflected in the Religious Education syllabi⁶⁴ (as it is indeed reflected in the national newspapers).

Conclusion

Religious diversification is an ongoing process in Malawi, supportive of both religiosity and democracy, and of national unity.

⁶³ Though "The Pastors' Voice" sounds quite comprehensive, it represents little, possibly just a small fraction of the Charismatic sector.

⁶⁴ It seems to me that in the current syllabi Christianity is portrayed as a highly synthetic and strongly western construct. *This has been shown to be true for the Primary School Curriculum by Olausson Jessica Jarhall, *A Look at Changes in Primary Religious Education*, Linköping: Linköping University Electronic Press, 2001. Also available on the web under swepub:oai:DiVA.org:liv-62973 for free download.

11 Islamization in Malawi – Perceptions and Reality¹ (2006)

Many events related to Islam increase people's heartbeat rate, and the topic of Islamization is definitely one such for many who consider themselves to be Christians and equally so for many who consider Islam not to be a religious threat but a political one. Islamization has been much talked about, sometimes understood as (re)Islamization of an already Muslim society or as the Islamization of a Christian or otherwise non-Islamic society. With Islamization being talked about so much, and being such a world-wide issue, I intend to investigate how Islamization is faring in Malawi and how perceptions and reality meet (or don't meet).

Islamization is usually seen as a current issue, but if the word is understood in its original meaning, Islamization is as old as Islam. First Medina was Islamized (622), then other parts of Arabia—including Mecca—and from Arabia Islam spread to much of the Middle East, North Africa, Central- and South Asia and beyond. Islamization of a society does not necessarily mean that all become Muslims, but that Islam is the dominant religion.² In this chapter I want to investigate if and how far Malawi has been Islamized. There has been much talk about this, especially around 1994 when Malawi elected a Muslim president to replace the dictator Dr Hastings [Kamuzu] Banda, who claimed to be an elder of the Church of Scotland.³ To concentrate on this—disputed—Islamization would be too narrow, so I will start with the beginnings, though I will put some extra emphasis on the last 20 years or so.

¹ First published as: Klaus Fiedler, "Islamization in Malawi – Perceptions and Reality," in Klaus Müller (ed), *Mission im Islam*, Verlag für Theologie und Wissenschaft, Nürnberg 2006.

² In Iraq for example, today there are still about 5% Christians. There are only a small number of Jews left, since most migrated to Israel after 1948. *Since the American and British invasion of Iraq, the number of Christians has been considerable reduced.

³ His claim was silently tolerated for a long time by both the CCAP (Church of Central Africa Presbyterian) and the Church of Scotland, until, in his waning days of power, the Church of Scotland publicly repudiated it, pointing out that the Presbyterian eldership is indeed for life (and Banda was made a church elder in Scotland when young), but remains valid only as long as the person is an active member of a Kirk Session and through it of a Presbytery. After leaving Scotland Banda never attempted anything like this.

1. The Beginnings of Islamization of Malawi

If one is willing not to count a Portuguese military expedition into the Southern tip of Malawi as a Catholic mission enterprise,⁴ Islam was the first foreign religion⁵ to find adherents in the territory of what is today Malawi.

As a whole, Islam in Malawi is part of East African Islam.⁶ It entered Malawi on the wings of the East Coast trade, which connected the interior of Africa to the Tanzanian coast (especially Kilwa), in which the Yao were an important link and important agents.⁷ Though the Yao were at the centre of this trade already in the 17th and 18th century, travelling regularly to the coast, they only began to turn to Islam when the Swahili/Arab traders began to travel inland before the middle of the 19th century. It seems possible that already in the 1850s there were some Muslim teachers in the capital of Chief Makanjira⁸ on the south eastern shore of the Lake. However, it was only in the 1870s that Chief Makanjira III declared himself a Muslim and made Islam his court religion.⁹ The powerful neighbouring Yao chiefs Jalasi and Mponda followed.¹⁰

⁴ A priest accompanying the troupes was killed, but that may make him neither a martyr nor a missionary. David Barrett's *World Christian Encyclopedia* (Nairobi: OUP 1982), though, dates the beginning of the Roman Catholic Church in Malawi at 1561.

⁵ Here defined as a "book" religion. All migrants into Malawi brought, of course, their own variants of African Traditional Religion, with the Ngoni religion arriving from South Africa at approximately the same time.

⁶ For a thorough study of the history and character of East African Islam see, still unsurpassed: J. Spencer Trimmingham, *Islam in East Africa*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1964. References to Malawi are found on pp. 28-29 and 47.

⁷ Edward A. Alpers, "Trade, State and Society among the Yao in the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of African History*, vol. 10/3, 1969, pp. 405-420.

⁸ J.F. Elton, visiting in the 1870s, found a *mwaliimu* there, teaching reading and the Qur'an (J.F. Elton, *Travels and Researches among the Lakes and Mountains of Eastern and Central Africa*, ed. H.B. Cotterill, London

⁹ David Bone, "An Outline History of Islam in Malawi" in David Bone (ed), *Malawi's Muslims. Historical Perspectives*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2000, pp. 13-26.

¹⁰ In 1875, when Mponda permitted the Livingstonia Mission to establish itself at the (somewhat remote) Cape Maclear, he either was already a Muslim or had strong Muslim leanings. At Cape Maclear the few Christian converts were not from among his subjects. On 12.6.1891 the Roman Catholic White Fathers' missionaries Adolphe Lechaptois and Joseph Mercui, recorded in their diary: "A mosque is under

It is important to know that in Malawi as virtually everywhere in inland East Africa, the spread of Islam was not associated with war, as was originally the case in the Middle East and in North Africa, but with trade. As the East Coast trade was also slave trade, both, the incoming missions (1859)¹¹ and the incoming British authorities (1889) opposed it. The Yao chiefs around the southern end of the Lake (and the Jumbe of Nkhotakota) in turn rejected the missions¹² and British power. The chiefs' resistance was subdued in a number of British military expeditions,¹³ but they implied no British hostility to or suspicion of Islam.

Another, possibly earlier entry point of Islam into Malawi is the town of Nkhotakota on the Western shore of the Lake, where a Muslim trader in ivory and slaves established himself around 1840 and established the dynasty of the Jumbes of Nkhotakota that lasted until the fourth Jumbe was deposed by the British in 1895.¹⁴ Through the agency of the Jumbes a Muslim community was established, which became the core of the Islamization of about 10% of the Chewa in the Central Region of Malawi.

The third entry point of Islam into Malawi was in the very north near Karonga, where another Swahili trader, Mlozi bin Kazbadema, established himself as "Sultan of the Ngonde." His defeat and execution as a traitor by

construction in the town" ("The Mponda Mission Diary 1889-1891" in Kenneth R. Ross (ed), *Christianity in Malawi. A Source Book*, Gweru: Mambo-Kachere, 1996, pp. 15-22).

¹¹ David Livingstone came in 1859 (in government service but still seeing him as a missionary pioneer, the UMCA (Universities Mission to Central Africa) worked at Magomero 1861/2 (at the edge of the Yao territory 20 km south of Zomba), and the Free Church of Scotland Livingstonia Mission came in 1875 (the first permanent mission) followed by the Church of Scotland Mission in Blantyre (1876). The UMCA returned to the Lake in 1882 and settled permanently on Likoma Island in 1885. *For the UMCA history see: James Tengatenga, *The UMCA in Malawi. A History of the Anglican Church*. Zomba: Kachere, 2010.

¹² The Yao chief Kapeni of Blantyre welcomed the Presbyterian missionaries and 10-20% of all Yao never became Muslims, mainly in Zomba, Chiradzulu and Blantyre districts.

¹³ In these expeditions Sikh soldiers from India played a major role.

¹⁴ George Shepperson, "The Jumbe of Nkhotakota and some Aspects of the History of Islam in British Central Africa," in I.M. Lewis (ed), *Islam in Tropical Africa*, London: OUP, 1966, pp. 193-205.

the British ended the North End War, but a Muslim community of some villages remains until today.¹⁵

The fourth entry point cannot be defined geographically. Through British influence Indians came to Malawi. About two thirds of them were Muslims. They were Sunni just as the Muslims who came from the East Coast, though they belong to different Sunni schools of law.¹⁶

British rule and increased Islamization

That the British subdued the Muslim chiefs did not imply any enmity against Islam or preference for Christianity. Neither did it slow down the process of Islamization. To the contrary, as in many other parts of Africa, where colonial rule was established, the Pax Britannica and the emerging modern transport system made the movement of Muslim missionaries easier. The earliest missionaries in Yao land may well have been Swahili, but most of them were Yao, most prominent among them were Abdullah bin Haji Mkwanda (1860-1930) and his student Thabit bin Muhammad Ngaunje (1880-1959). Through their work, and the work of others who had been trained in Islam, often at the Coast, Islam became firmly established among the majority of the Yao¹⁷ and a minority of the Chewa.

As elsewhere in Africa, Islam became deeply integrated into the societies it entered. Thus Yao Islam was born, in which the Islamic family law is applied only occasionally to a matrilineal society, though this reduces in no

¹⁵ David Bone, "An Outline History of Islam in Malawi" in David Bone (ed), *Malawi's Muslims. Historical Perspectives*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2000, pp. 13-26 [14]. O.J. Kalinga, "The Karonga War: Commercial Rivalry and Politics of Survival," *Journal of African History*, 21(2), 1980, pp. 204-218.

¹⁶ That would not stop them to pray together, though for other reasons Indians had their own mosques. In Karonga Indians and Blacks were well integrated in the same mosque (Research Jacob Kumwenda).

¹⁷ For a thorough discussion of the conversion of the Yao majority to Islam read Edward A. Alpers, "Towards a History of the Expansion of Islam in East Africa: the Matrilineal Peoples of the Southern Interior," in: T.O. Ranger and I.N. Kimambo (eds), *The Historical Study of African Religion*, London: Heinemann, 1972, pp. 172-201, reprinted in David Bone, *Malawi's Muslims*, pp. 27-63. As usual, many factors contribute to conversion, but it is clear that the Yao chiefs' control of the East Coast trade played a major role and that the adaptation of the Yao initiation rites (which already included circumcision for boys) to Islam facilitated its spread greatly.

way the feeling of Islamic identity.¹⁸ In this Yao Islam the tariqas of Shadhiliya and Quadiriyah began to play a dominant role.¹⁹

Stagnation of Islamization

Somewhat early in the 20th century Islam began to lose its missionary power and its expansion through conversion came to a standstill. Those societies that were Islamized by 1920 remained so, but there was no further Islamization.²⁰ This development is not surprising as it happened at the same time and in the same way all over Eastern Africa.²¹ This happened because those traditional societies that had not accepted Islam decided to become Christian. In East Africa the Christian missions, after initial struggles, had "jumped" the Muslim coastal belt and established themselves in the interior, and, mainly through their schools, offered these societies a different (and more attractive) pathway to advancement.²² In Malawi the Muslim belt was at the east, so the missions could not jump it as they had come in from the south west moving northwards. The first mission (after the removal of Livingstonia from Cape Maclear to Bandawe) were established quite far from Muslim territory, and the first society to declare its allegiance to Christianity were the Tonga, well north even of the Muslim settlement at Nkhotakota.²³ If the first missions were far from

¹⁸ For a thorough study of Yao Islam see: A.P.H. Thorold, *The Yao Muslims: Religious and Social Change in Southern Malawi* (unpublished).

¹⁹ While the tariqas in Malawi clearly belong to the wider world of Muslim tariqas, different from West Africa they have in Malawi no distinct settlements. For details see Imuran Shareef Mahomed, "The Development of Tariqas in Malawi: Quadiriyah, Shadhiliyah and Sukuti," *Religion in Malawi* 10, pp. 19-24. Of the two tariqa, Quadiriyah has become the more prominent one. *Ian Dicks (*An African Worldview. The Muslim Amachinga Yawo of Southern Malawi*, Zomba: Kachere, 2012) found no Shadhiliyah in the area of his study, but there are still Shadhiliyah mosques in the Nkhotakota area.

²⁰ Spencer Trimmingham, *Islam in East Africa*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1964, p. 29.

²¹ Ibid, p. 28.

²² In Swahili *ustaarabu* (the Arab culture) is still today equaled to civilization. At around 1900 the inland people of Tanzania were still considered as *washenzi* (bush people) by the Muslims at the Coast. Even today *washenzi* is one of the rudest way to speak of people. It is not surprising then that the despised people of the interior were attracted by the incoming Christian civilization.

²³ This example shows that a society can be Christianized early (and quickly), just as it happens with societies turning Muslim, in spite of a slow growth in baptisms.

Muslim territory, it remained to the second set of missions to reach out into that direction. In the south Domasi Mission was established especially the hope that it, being close to the religious frontier, would help to stop the progress of Islamization, especially of the Yao.²⁴ Livingstonia Mission established a station at Karonga, which was to the Nkhonde there much more attractive than the remnant of Mlozi's followers. The UMCA established its first mission as well in some distance to Muslim territory, but then entered into direct competition by establishing missions at Nkhotakota, Malindi and Mponda's. In 1902 the Roman Catholic White Fathers founded a mission at Mua, at the northern edge of Yao territory.²⁵ While these missions managed to provide to the local populations enough attraction (spiritual and social) to stop the Muslim advance, they made no inroads into established Muslim societies.²⁶

Islamization and education

Islam reached Malawi as a modernizing agency, offering an advanced religion (with a holy book), improved *mankhwala*,²⁷ wider cultural connections, and, foremost, literacy. When the Christian missions started to compete with Islam, they offered similar attractions: the school system, the

In 1894 there were few baptized, but already 18 schools regularly attended by about a thousand pupils (John McCracken, *Politics and Christianity in Malawi 1875-1940. The Impact of the Livingstonia Mission in the Northern Province*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2000²[1977], p. 114.

²⁴ This indeed happened. In the Domasi area there are even today a good number of Yao villages that turned from ATR directly to Christianity.

²⁵ Ian Linden, *Catholics, Peasants and Chewa Resistance in Nyasaland 1889-1939*, London: Heinemann, 1974, In 1901 the Montfort Missionaries had founded their first station in Nguludi, close to the famous slave house there.

²⁶ Often the argument is advanced (for ex. E. Alpers, *Malawi's Muslims. Historical Perspectives*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2000 "Towards a History of Expansion of Islam in East Africa," p. 60) that, because of its easier demands, Islam advances rapidly while Christianity struggles to gain a few converts. History seems not to bear out this assumption. Though most Christian missions kept the number of baptisms in the initial stages low, in societies where Christian missions were first, Islam made little inroads. In situations of competition Islam usually had—up to about 1900 or 1910 depending on locality—the upper hand and Christianity after that.

²⁷ The charms the *walimu* prescribed were considered to be more powerful than traditional charms.

medical system, an advanced religion (with an equally holy book as Islam and maybe even wider connections) and an entry point into a new and fascinating culture.

In the decades around 1910 many societies made the decision—where they had a choice—to opt for Christianity instead of Islam. It seems to me that the perceived higher quality of the Christian school system explains some reasons for such a choice. Both school systems provided literacy, but literacy in the vernacular was more useful in life (and it could even lead onwards to literacy in English) than learning to chant Arabic (without understanding it for years).

This dichotomy of educational systems made Muslim societies to be on the losing end. The Qur'an schools did not provide an entry into the modernizing sector of society, and most Muslim parents feared to send their children to Christian schools. When after 1926 the colonial government started to take an interest in the school system through its grants-in-aid system, it realized that there were very few Muslim schools to qualify for government assistance. The government decided to institute secular schools in the Muslim areas. But many parents shunned even such secular schools, perceiving them also to be "Christian."²⁸ All this made Islam in the period between the two wars unattractive to societies that had not yet been Islamized. Even where there was a remnant of "unbelievers" in predominantly Islamic areas, these remnant groups were not easily attracted to Islam, and many of these later became Christian.²⁹

Though Islam was on the defensive, so to say, for decades, few Muslims became Christians, and there were equally few conversions in the other direction. Overall the relationship was one of mutual acceptance, though such acceptance was not necessarily always a happy one.

²⁸ This perception was aided by the shortage of qualified Muslim teachers so that often Christian teachers were employed.

²⁹ This phenomenon repeated itself all over Africa. I observed in South East Tanzania that those Makonde who had not become Muslims by 1960, though living right among the Muslim Makonde, turned to Christianity instead (both Roman Catholic and Kanisa la Biblia). The most famous case are the 500,000 Maguzawa (those who "ran away" from Islam) in Nigeria. They were Hausa and were spread all over the ("Muslim") Hausa belt in Central Nigeria. The work among the Maguzawa was mainly done by Nigerian mission societies. In Germany sometimes the 500,000 were claimed as converts from Islam (Idea Nachrichtendienst).

Malawi's independence

After the Second European War Islamic participation in the educational sector slowly increased, but reached no level even remotely similar to that of the Christian missions. Muslim schools of the Western type were few³⁰ and Muslim parents were not so keen to send their children to either Christian or government (secular) schools. This changed to some extent after independence in 1964 when the government increased its influence in the school system and emphasized that there must be no discrimination of Muslim students in any school.³¹

Though independence seems to have led to an increase in overall Muslim school attendance, access to the modern sector of society remained restricted by limited education for so many. The *madarasa* system, which a century ago was a pathway to modernization, had been unable to adapt to modernity in a non-Muslim social context and had become a positive hindrance.³² Most Malawians work in the informal sector of the economy, but Islamic education made sure that comparatively fewer Muslims than Christians entered the formal sector. If they did, a more frequent venue was business.³³ Another venue was politics. Right from the

³⁰ "By 1962, there were a mere 29 schools under Muslim proprietorship and of these only 7 qualified for government assistance out of a national total of 949 assisted and 2105 unassisted schools. (David Bone, "Modernity and Marginalization," in David Bone, *Malawi's Muslims. Historical Perspectives*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2000, pp. 69-88).

³¹ In literature Christian schools have often been accused of demanding conversion as a precondition to school attendance. I have never found any concrete cases attached to such statements and have found no evidence that such a policy existed. But there is no doubt that attendance at a Christian school could put social pressure on a student to conform or genuinely attract a student to the Christian faith. (My second supervisor at Dar-es-Salaam University, Prof Rev Dr Cuthbert Omari, was such a "school convert" from Islam.)

³² For a detailed study and assessment of the *Madrasah* system in Malawi see Alfred Matiki, "Problems of Islamic Education in Malawi," in David Bone, *Malawi's Muslims*, pp. 154-163, earlier published in *Journal of the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs* 12, 1991, pp. 127-134 and *Religion in Malawi* 4 (1994), pp. 18-22. Matiki argues that even the religious teaching of the *Madrasah* is too narrow leaving out Moral Instruction (*tahzib*) that would "link all subjects to the life of the individual" (p. 161) and Arabic.

³³ This is how Bakili Muluzi established his place in the formal sector. When, as President of Malawi, he came, as Chancellor of the University of Malawi, for the first time to a Chancellor College congregation [the annual graduation ceremony],

beginnings both Masauko Chipembere (Anglican) and Kamuzu Banda (Presbyterian)³⁴ made sure that there was Islamic participation in politics.

Even in the 1960s Muslim contacts to the wider world of Islam remained very limited. Islam remained deeply rooted in traditional Yao (and some parts of Chewa) society, but still took, in the nation as a whole, more an inward than outward looking position.

While this is true for the 1960s, there was also the beginning of a willingness of more Muslim parents to give their children a Western education. This led to the establishment, in the late 1970s and the 1980s, of a small but significant group of Muslims who held positions of "doctors, lawyers, teachers, business executives, shop managers, journalists and clerical and administrative officers."³⁵ Though they had received either secular or Christian western education, these people consciously remained Muslims, establishing slowly a modernizing force in Islamic society.

The Islamic Revival

All over the world Islam experienced a revival starting in the 1970s. Muslim societies in Malawi were no exception to this. One of the first expressions of this revival was the opening up of new contacts to the wider Muslim world. Muslim students could attend international conferences, and in 1981 the first such Muslim South Africa Youth Conference even took place in Blantyre.³⁶ For a small but increasing number of students studies abroad were made possible.³⁷ Money from abroad greatly increased the visibility of Islam³⁸ by the construction of new mosques mainly along the Blantyre –

the speaker found it necessary to explain that due to his Muslim faith the Chancellor had not been able to attain much higher education. (But for being Chancellor of the University there are no educational preconditions).

³⁴ Both had a strong religious background, but did not show the reality of religious practice.

³⁵ David Bone, "Modernists and Marginalization," p. 77.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ The perception that large numbers of students, Muslims and even non-Muslims, are sent abroad to Islamic countries only to return as ardent missionaries to their faith is not based on any observation of facts.

³⁸ Some people feel that the magnificent Roman Catholic Church of St Montfort Parish, Balaka is an answer to this mosque building programme, only that this church is much bigger and probably more beautiful.

Mangochi - Monkey Bay road,³⁹ and a number of Islamic institutions were established, among them even a Girls Secondary School in Dedza.⁴⁰

In these institutions and elsewhere there has been an increasing cooperation between Asian and Black Muslims in Malawi. Further activities include several Islamic Information Bureaus and a growing interest in publishing, which includes two translations of the Qur'an⁴¹ and a radio station.⁴² All these (and other) activities and institutions led to a growing self confidence of Muslims in Malawi.

Many of these new mosques, institutions and activities were financed from abroad through Muslim missions, especially based in Kuwait. Important as this external funding and some personnel⁴³ may have been, their activities found a ready response and cooperation from Malawians, just as the Christian missionaries did and do.

The period of democratization

Events are sometimes both the result of local initiatives as much as of global developments. Though the democratic change that swept over many parts of Africa may well be part of those developments that followed the petering out of Communism around 1989, it is obvious that the process of democratization in Malawi was triggered off by the Lenten Pastoral Letter of the Catholic Bishops of 1992, obviously a Christian event.⁴⁴ Once the Catholic initiative was supported by the CCAP, the Public Affairs Committee (PAC) was started to represent (what was conceived to be and indeed were)

³⁹ Dr J.C. Chakanza recently travelled much of this road (Zomba to close before Monkey Bay). He counted 58 mosques (but he did not count the churches).

⁴⁰ Since then the number of girls' schools has increased. For a study see: The Role and Impact of Munazzamat Al-Dawa Al Islamia Schools in Malawi from 2000-2006. A Case Study of Zomba and Mangochi Secondary Schools, As Salam Boys, As Salam Girls, Al Bakr Boys and Aisha Girls Secondary Schools, Kachere Document no. 35.

⁴¹ Both translations have their own problems and are not accepted everywhere.

⁴² On the radio dial Radio Islam is close to Radio Maria, which came on the air a bit earlier. Some Muslim leaders are said to warn their people not to listen to Radio Maria, which has a good reception in the predominantly Muslim areas in South East Malawi.

⁴³ There have been, for example, Egyptian missionaries at Zomba Islamic Mission.

⁴⁴ For context and discussion see: Matthew Schoffeleers, *In Search of Truth and Justice, Confrontations between Church and State in Malawi 1960 – 1994*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1999, pp. 121-234.

the interests of the majority of Malawians. Though PAC was led by the churches, its membership also included the Law Society, the Chamber of Commerce and the Muslim Association of Malawi. Later the pressure groups AFORD and UDF joined.⁴⁵ In PAC there was quite some Muslim representation, not just from the Muslim Association of Malawi, but many businessmen were Muslims and in UDF there was a strong Muslim component, with the leader being himself a Muslim. The churches did not aspire to political office, and though it may have looked in the beginning as if Chakufwa Chihana of AFORD might become the leader of the struggle for Malawi's "second independence," it soon became obvious that Bakili Muluzi would play this role, since his party⁴⁶ was based on the South, which had almost half the population of Malawi. That he was a Muslim seems to have played no role either for him (having no Islamist political agenda) or for the different members of PAC. The MCP government made some (weak) attempts to play the anti-Islamist card, but got very little mileage out of that.

The first democratic elections

After the government lost the 1993 referendum it had to prepare for general elections in 1994. The pressure groups AFORD and UDF were allowed to become parties, so that the constellation was MCP (strong in the centre) against UDF (strong in the south) and AFORD (strong in the north). There were only few Muslims in the north, in the centre they were a small minority, and their main concentration was in the south (though even there they were just a minority). Given the regional bases of the three parties, it could be expected that most Muslims would vote UDF. But it was equally clear that no president could be elected by the Muslim vote alone.⁴⁷ When the elections were over, Muluzi and the UDF had a clear majority, and by far most of the voters had been Christian.

The prospect of having a Muslim president did not go down well with some Christians, though. *Some* of the Charismatic Christians in Blantyre banded together to pray against having a Muslim president. In their prayers they banned Satan so that Malawi could never have a Muslim president. In

⁴⁵ When UDF gained political power in 1994, the parties left PAC, so that it could continue to speak to government from the religious side.

⁴⁶ Technically still a "pressure group."

⁴⁷ Assuming that all Muslims would vote for him, he would need still almost double that number of votes from the Christian side.

a vision they got assurance of victory, when they saw the future president of Malawi holding a bible.⁴⁸ When at the end of their prayers a Muslim was elected president, I did not learn how Satan managed to escape the ban, but I was told that God's promises are sure but not exactly timed.⁴⁹

Though the issue of Islamization seems not to have played a major role in the outcome of the elections, some concerns were even uttered publicly so that the press took note. Muluzi gave the unequivocal answer that he had no intention of making Malawi a Muslim country. This did not stop some people from disbelieving him. If he can't admit, then he must have secret plans to do so, or at least, he will not do anything to oppose such developments.

That these sentiments existed cannot be denied, but if they played a role in the voting, it can only have been small, since the large majority of Christians in the south (where the party had its regional base) voted for him.

Malawi under a Muslim president

Immediately after ascent to power, Muluzi started to hold enough Bibles,⁵⁰ not to indicate that he would like to become a Christian,⁵¹ but because he wanted to co-opt the churches to support his government. So he accepted all possible invitations to Christian anniversaries.⁵² He also attended Muslim

⁴⁸ There may be a parallel here: Not long before election date, Kamlepo Kalua, a presidential candidate who is said to have Charismatic connections, declared publicly that God had given him the victory already and that he would be the next president. When journalists queried how that could be with his party having fielded only two parliamentary candidates, he answered that this is no problem for God. After he had assembled a tiny share of the votes, I asked him what had happened. He answered: "God gave me the victory indeed, but someone else took it away." – In the next elections (1999) he almost doubled his votes (about 0.15%), but did not make any victory claims.

⁴⁹ The promise can be expected to be fulfilled in the third General Election (2004), since this time there is no Muslim presidential candidate.

⁵⁰ When invited to a church function, he was usually—like his predecessor Kamuzu Banda—given the honour to read either the NT or OT reading.

⁵¹ There were some rumours to this extent in those days.

⁵² Several churches, parishes and institutions took advantage of this situation ("if you invite the President, that will end your financial worries"). This led Dr Felix Chingota, then the Moderator of the General Synod of the CCAP, to issue a warning letter against this practice. – Even the Baptists in one case went that way, inviting

functions whenever the occasion offered, but Christians being about five times in numbers, offered far more opportunities.

In spite of his frequent attendance at Christian prayers, the Islamization fears persisted with some. The suspicions were fuelled by the fact that soon after coming to power Muluzi attempted to improve the diplomatic relations to Muslim countries.⁵³ A more specific allegation was that he had received \$US 98 Million from Kuwait to "Islamize Malawi." It is not surprising that no evidence exists that he received that money, but it is surprising to me that people believed that so little money could achieve so much. Before Muluzi came to power as much as after, there had been money coming in from the Middle East to further Islam in Malawi, but there was no obvious change in the pattern, and development aid was given in the usual stingy ways.⁵⁴

In some Christian circles the idea of Islamization was taken further by the "discovery" of a secret plan to Islamize Africa. This secret plan was disclosed to me in a public meeting organized by the Christian Council of Malawi at Sun and Sand resort at the Lake with maybe 200 participants. Since the plan was secret, there was of course no need to verify it.⁵⁵ The plan was simple, outlined in a few steps:

1. Take over trade and business
2. Establish Muslim parties
3. Take over the government
4. Turn the country into an Islamic state
5. Arrange that all Muslims will marry Christian women

Mrs Anne Muluzi to be the guest of honour at a fundraising coffee morning of the Blantyre churches. Hearing of this I decided not to attend (though I am a Baptist and like coffee), but then nobody noted my absence, as the president dismissed Anne Muluzi as his wife and first lady, so that the coffee morning never took place.

⁵³ That included the establishment of diplomatic relations to Libya, at that time considered by many governments as a pariah state. A few years ago Gaddafi even came for a visit, with supposedly 200 cars flown in, so that the newspapers fondly spoke of Gaddafi's road show.

⁵⁴ A general laughing stock have become the 100 tractors which Gaddafi of Libya promised and which never came. When he came to visit, they were promised again. Months later the newspapers quoted official Libyan sources that this offer had been a joke.

⁵⁵ The plan supposedly was made by a high level Islamic gathering in Nigeria. If that meeting ever took place or if that plan ever existed is of little interest. Important is that many people in Malawi believed it to be true.

Muslim men would promise their prospective spouses that they may keep their religion, but once married pressure would be put on them to convert to Islam.

The "plan" was presented to the public by Rev. Mkandawire (Seventh Day Baptist), the Vice Chair of the Christian Council of Malawi. I have no doubt that he believed it to be true. And it seems to have struck a chord of agreement among at least some of the listeners.⁵⁶ The reason may have been that it matched some of the people's fears and that some aspects of the plan had already been "fulfilled"⁵⁷ and that the fact that occasionally a Christian woman would marry a Muslim was taken as the beginning fulfillment of the last (and most dangerous) step of the plan.⁵⁸

An interesting episode was provided by the German Evangelical information service *Idea* which devoted a whole issue of its weekly news summary journal to the advance of Islam in Southern Africa. When I read it I looked for the information base, and I could only find opinions, no facts. I corresponded with the editor who assured me that he had gathered all this information during an extended trip to Africa, and, by the way, that was only the last of such trips. I was not impressed, least so by his argument that he had withheld the most dangerous news: that Muluzi had been given millions of dollars with only one condition attached to them: That he should allow mosques to be built everywhere in Malawi. I replied that there had never been restrictions on the building of mosques in Malawi, and that the President had neither the powers to allow nor to disallow the building of mosques and that he neither had land that he could allocate to that purpose. This episode was an interesting case of how fears can fashion the perception of reality.

In the early years of Muluzi the building of mosques and Islamic institutions continued, but there is no indication of any accelerated pace.

⁵⁶ I only spoke to a few of the participants, duly impressed. But the fact that this "plan" was "disclosed" to me by quite a number of people after the meeting shows that there were more people than a few to believe it.

⁵⁷ Such fulfillments never need to be taken too precisely. That the majority of the big trade was in Muslim hands has been already true two generations before the "plan" was devised.

⁵⁸ In seeing things like these it was overlooked that such marriages were nothing new and were and continued to be rare. Nobody told me that she or he had given any thought to the implication that all Muslim women would have to remain unmarried (or marry a non-Muslim, forbidden by Islamic law).

Christian – Muslim relations

In 1999 Muluzi won the second democratic elections with 300,000 votes in his favour.⁵⁹ In the north there was a "religious" reaction to this: 13 mosques were attacked, with differing amounts of damage.⁶⁰ In retaliation the UDF offices in Mangochi were severely damaged. That a political retaliation took place seems to indicate that right from the start it was not a religious conflict, but a political one.

A similar incident took place when the government, against all the law, arrested five (Muslim) foreigners as Al Kaida suspects and deported them, against the ruling of the courts,⁶¹ to the USA.⁶² After a few days all five suspects were freed unconditionally, and the President himself went to the suspects' wives to apologize. As a reaction against the illegal deportation eight Christian churches in the Mangochi area were attacked⁶³ as well as a government institution in Limbe. This also seems to have been a political incident.⁶⁴

⁵⁹ The vote was disputed. Justice Dunstain Mwaungulu (a Baptist) calculated that, using the official figures of the Presidential and Parliamentary Elections, 300,000 votes were very difficult to account for. For putting his calculations on the internet, Mwaungulu was later impeached by Parliament for gross misconduct. After months of delay, Muluzi did not sign the impeachment, but this delay had provided a major reason for Britain, the EU and the IMF to withhold all budget support. The election results were contested in court, but the opposition concentrated on a useless formality (arguing that 50% of the electorate means that even those registered voters who did not vote must be included.) The registration process leading up to the election was prone to heavy rigging by the government side, which made registration in opposition strongholds as difficult as possible.

⁶⁰ The original message that reached me here in the south was that 13 mosques were *burnt down*. The Anglican Bishop of Mzuzu coordinated Christian efforts to help in the repair of the damages. *For more see: Ibrahim Milazi, "The Burning of Mosques in the North: Is it the Beginning or Climax of Political Fanaticism or Christian Fundamentalism in Malawi?" *Religion in Malawi* 9, pp. 42-43.

⁶¹ When the judge demanded that the suspects be produced in court, the government representative answered that they simply could not find them.

⁶² For this venture the US Embassy hired a whole plane to fly them out to Lusaka.

⁶³ At least one (Baptist) church, a grass structure, was burnt down.

⁶⁴ The government promised compensation, but so far no money has reached those who had been attacked.

A more religious issue, though, were attempts to stop Christian missionary work in the Muslim Yao area. Threats were uttered,⁶⁵ and one missionary was even persuaded to pull down a Christian building for worship since this looked too similar to Islamic places of worship. But government did not attempt to infringe on religious freedom, which is guaranteed by Malawi's constitution.⁶⁶

Before that there was also some local conflict about the preaching of a Seventh-day Adventist evangelist⁶⁷ who used the Qur'an in order to refute the Muslim faith.

True as these incidents were, they are only a reflection of a small aspect of the politico/religious reality. As a whole the relationship between Christians and Muslims is not complicated. Muslims and Christians live as neighbours, mosques and churches stand and are being built side by side, intermarriages take place both ways. There are some tensions here and there as they have been there before. In the educational field Muslims still have much to catch up,⁶⁸ and though there has been a clear growth in Muslim self consciousness, this has not turned into aggressiveness.

Conversions

The acid test of religious growth are conversions. Widespread is the public perception that there are many conversions from Christianity to Islam and just a few conversions the other way round. This perception of widespread conversion to Islam is not tied to any empirical data, but to general perceptions, like "They go to study abroad and then return as ardent missionaries of Islam" or "they all marry Muslims."

There exists no reliable study of movements between the two religions, and I have not done one myself. I have formed my picture from general

⁶⁵ Some missionaries were accused for looking after orphans for proselytizing purposes.

⁶⁶ This does not imply that the government is always keen to follow the Constitution. The President's commercial activities are clearly against the Constitution.

⁶⁷ He was not an official representative of his denomination.

⁶⁸ Though there is obviously no discrimination, the number of Muslim lecturers at Chancellor College is still clearly below 17%, which would match the population ration. The same seems to apply to students. Interesting to me is that though the Department of Theology and Religious Studies has a Muslim lecturer, there are no Muslim students of Islam, neither undergraduate nor postgraduate.

information combined with a number of detailed observations and inquiries done by myself or others. The most general observation is that conversions (either way) are few. If one asks people about conversions, they may well answer that there is a lot, but they are never able to give the evidence matching their assumptions. This view is supported by the last government census of 2008 which counts 13% of the population as Muslim,⁶⁹ compared to 17% in the last census which included a *direct* question on religious affiliation, held in 1931.⁷⁰ Since census results are often quite unreliable, I do not take this as a proof of Muslim decline, but I feel safe to argue that the last census (done under a government led by a Muslim president) does not show evidence of any Muslim growth. Muslim figures seem not to contradict.⁷¹

A few years ago I sent a student into the area of a mosque west of Lilongwe. She recorded that the mosque was built by the traders (Asian and Yao) that moved into the area and that, in the overall history, there had been two conversions each way, all four related to marriage. About Lower Shire I learnt that there has been a large increase in the number of mosques, with all *muallims* being Yao, serving mainly migrant workers.⁷² There is the possibility of a number of conversions of local people.⁷³ The same may be true in the north, where a student mentioned that a few villages converted to Islam some time ago.⁷⁴ I also heard of a mosque north of Lilongwe which has some converts. In 2005 one of our students wrote his BA dissertation on Islam and Christianity in the Phalombe area. He visited all the ten mosques in that traditionally Christian area and calculated a growth rate of 0.18% over the last ten years, almost exclusively in the context of marriage, matched by a roughly equal amount of conversions from Islam to Christianity, also mostly in the context of marriage.

⁶⁹ The Christian population is given as 80%.

⁷⁰ *Over the years since 1931 no census had been held which included a *direct* question on religious adherence, therefore comparison with this long ago census is appropriate.

⁷¹ *This has changed since the chapter was first written. After the 2008 census leaders of the Muslim community protested against the results of the census, claiming that the Muslim part of the population was between 30 and 35%. No evidence was provided in spite of claims that such existed.

⁷² Especially in the area of the big sugar factory.

⁷³ Information from Dr. J.C. Chakanza.

⁷⁴ I was not able to verify the claim.

In order to get some more details about conversions, I asked a fourth year BA class of 10 students, all Christians, to remember all cases of conversions (either way), be it through personal knowledge or indirect information. 16 cases of conversion to Islam were remembered, 12 of them of women who married Muslim husbands. Two Christians were good friends to a Muslim, and both followed her faith. One student at Chancellor College converted from the Seventh-day Adventist Church to Islam.⁷⁵

This survey of just 10 students cannot claim to be representative in any way, except that it matches the picture that I have and observe here and there.⁷⁶ There are conversions to Islam, they have been there for a long time, but they are infrequent and seem not to increase in frequency, or maybe just marginally so. The survey also confirmed the general perception that most conversions to Islam are due to marriage, and that usually the converting spouse is the woman,⁷⁷ the most high profile case among these being Shanil Muluzi, wife of the former President Muluzi, who converted from being a Catholic.⁷⁸

The ten students were aware of 20 conversions from Islam to any Christian denomination. Some of these were prominent cases: Sheikh Mangani Muluzi who found Christ in a death-bed experience,⁷⁹ and Sheikh Yasini Gama, now a CCAP Christian and the Head of the Evangelism Department of the Evangelical Association of Malawi.⁸⁰ One student reported that his father left Islam at the age of 13 and became an Anglican.⁸¹ Two CCAP church elders had been Muslims before, as well as one of the evangelists of Blantyre Synod. Marriage also plays a role: there were four women who became Christians on marriage. One of them returned to Islam soon, taking her husband with her, the other two

⁷⁵ He was a student in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies. His conversion is the only one of a student at Chancellor College that has come to my knowledge over 11 years.

⁷⁶ Over the years I asked similar questions in classes and got similar answers.

⁷⁷ This is not always the case. Rachel Banda found two conversions from Islam to Baptist where the husband followed the wife.

⁷⁸ She was originally the second wife. After Muluzi dismissed (or separated from) his first wife, she was made the first wife in a splendid Muslim wedding, though she had been married to him long before that.

⁷⁹ After that he lived for a few years (died 2003) with a clear Christian testimony.

⁸⁰ Similar to this may be the case of a now prominent Sheikh who was once a Catholic seminarian.

⁸¹ Later he became a Presbyterian.

remained Catholics, even after they lost their husbands, one by divorce, the other by death. One man also became a Christian because of marriage, as did a student's uncle.⁸²

A special group of converts from Islam are women who return to the Christian faith after their marriage to a Muslim ends by either divorce or death.⁸³ The most prominent of such women is Anne Muluzi, the president's first wife, who, after separation, rejoined CCAP and is a prominent *Mvano* member. A student of mine observed the same phenomenon at Domasi CCAP where several returning widows were readmitted into the church.⁸⁴

Of the 20 conversions reported, 11 had nothing to do with marriage. Some of the reported conversions took place long ago, others more recently. I could not discern a pattern of decline or increase in conversions, neither was I able to do so using other sources. That 10 students know of 20 conversions is no indication that conversions from Islam to Christianity are frequent, and the fact that they know of 15 conversions to Islam is no base for a claim that conversions to Islam are less frequent than to Christianity. But the evidence is clear enough that conversions take place both ways, and that a major part of these conversions takes place in the context of marriage.

How many Muslims and Christians are there in Malawi?

All the general and detailed evidence which I have been able to find makes it clear that the number of conversions either way is small, and if religious affiliation is accounted for in percentages with one digit after the decimal point, all these conversions do not show. This means that over the decades the number of Muslims must have grown through population growth, but not in terms of percentage, while the Christian percentage over the decades grew considerably due to conversions from African Traditional

⁸² He died after many years as a Christian.

⁸³ A student remembered his grandmother, who married a Muslim and after divorce joined Zambezi Evangelical Church.

⁸⁴ Other sources confirm this tendency. Since most women marry men older than themselves, and since men die earlier (in Malawi the difference is about three years, while in Germany it is about seven), many female converts to Islam have that chance to return to Christianity after their marriage. Often the chance offers earlier, due to divorce. I have no way to assess if the majority of women use it, but a significant number does.

Religion.⁸⁵ The last detailed religious census (of 1931) gave to Islam 17%, the most recent government census reduced the figure to 13%.⁸⁶ The Muslim claim that 30-35% of the population of Malawi are Muslims can only be seen as wishful thinking. Barrett's *World Christian Encyclopedia* gives 16.1%, predicting an increase to 17% by the year 2000. Patrick Johnstone in *Operation World* counts 16.3%.⁸⁷ Taking into account the information I obtained, such figures may well be correct, with no major changes being expected.

How many Christians are there in Malawi? Statistical figures often are low, because, provided by the churches, they represent full communicant members. But as with Islam, a more general definition must be employed. Muslims are counted in a sociological way. Anyone who claims to be one is counted as one. If that applies equally to the Christian faith, any figure around 75% makes sense.

Conclusion

In many ways it has become obvious that the perceptions of many do not match the reality. Even though the statistical data were limited, they indicate no changes in religious affiliation that would change a digit behind the point in percentage calculations, but on this numerical stability, Islam has experienced a major revival.

Since I wrote this article I have continued my research on Christian/Muslim and Muslim/Christian conversions using much more detailed information. I intend to publish the result. The picture emerging is more detailed and varied, but broadly supports the initial findings presented in this article.

⁸⁵ It could be argued that Islam would equally profit from conversions from ATR, but the evidence is not there. Islam absorbed the converts from ATR faster, so that after 1940 there were in the Muslim areas few ATR followers left to be converted. People who moved later into Muslim areas seem not to become attracted to Islam, and those who were left over tended in later stages to become Christians, not Muslims.

⁸⁶ Since there are some doubts about the accuracy of that census, the figures should not be taken at face value. To me they seem too low. An argument that could be used to support such a low figure is the fact that immigrants from Mozambique after 1930 were numerous (Lomwe) and not Muslims.

⁸⁷ Patrick Johnstone, *Operation World*, Bromley/Gerrards Cross, STL/WEC, ⁴1986.

12 Faith Missions: 125 Years¹

(1991)

With almost every jubilee, the precise dating of the beginning is a problem. This is equally true for the Faith Missions. But with the Faith Missions we have the advantage that a consensus has developed, taking the 25th June 1865 as the founding date, when Hudson Taylor walked out from church to the beach of Brighton and became willing—and told God so—to start a new mission for the interior of China that he would lead.² We could equally have taken the founding date as 3rd June 1865, when Hudson Taylor opened a bank account under the name of "China Inland Mission" or even the year 1866 when the first CIM missionaries, the famous Lammermuir Party,³ travelled to China. All these are possibilities, but I think that 1865 is indeed a good choice.

¹ This chapter is based on a presentation I gave at the annual conference of the Association of German Speaking Evangelical Missiologists (AfeM) in January 1991. For this chapter I have largely retained the presentation style, not having used the published version: Klaus Fiedler, "125 Jahre Glaubensmissionen: Die Anfänge," in: *Evangelikale Missiologie* 1989, p. 19-25. The presentation is based on my research into the ecclesiology of the Faith Missions, funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft. The resulting book is: Klaus Fiedler, *Ganz auf Vertrauen. Geschichte und Kirchenverständnis der Glaubensmissionen*. Gießen/Basel: Brunnen, 1992. (Out of print, now available for free download through <http://tinyurl.com/fiedler>). The English version (shorter, but with a new chapter and very differently organized), is Klaus Fiedler, *The Story of Faith Missions*. Regnum/Lynx: Oxford, 1994; also Albatross Books, Southerland NSW Australia, 1994; (Reprinted by Regnum Books, 1995, with the subtitle: *From Hudson Taylor to Present Day Africa*.)

² "Unable to bear the sight of a congregation of a thousand or more Christian people rejoicing in their own security, while millions were perishing for lack of knowledge. I wandered out on the sands alone, in great spiritual agony." (Hudson Taylor, *Retrospect*, London, ¹⁸1974). He also wrote: "Not a few abortive efforts had resulted in a deep conviction that a special agency was essential for the evangelisation of Inland China ... The grave difficulty of possibly interfering with existing missionary operations at home was foreseen; but it was concluded that, by simple trust in God, a suitable agency might be raised up and sustained without interfering injuriously with any existing work" (Hudson Taylor, *Retrospect*, London ¹⁸1974, p. 113).

³ *Lammermuir was the sailing ship they had hired to take them to China.

The China Inland Mission was not just another new mission, but the first mission of a completely new kind. I want to present the history of this new movement and the challenges this history presents to Evangelical missiologists.

In order to understand the historical importance of the Faith Missions I will first present an overall typology of the great Protestant missionary movement.⁴ (1) The pre-classical missions: Most of these missions received some kind of government support (SPCK, Danish-Halle Mission, Dutch missions in and beyond their colonies) or individual enterprises. Among the pre-classical missions the Moravians deserve a special mention as a mission that was the responsibility of a single congregation (Herrnhut). Very few pre-classical missions still exist today,⁵ probably only USPG and the Moravians. These few surviving pre-classical missions have adopted the characteristics of the classical missions and have an ecumenical orientation. It was the Puritan/Pietist revival that created the pre-classical missions.

(2) The pre-classical missions were the main carriers of the worldwide missionary advance of the "Great Century" (Latourette). They originated from the Great Awakening, which started in the USA in 1734, reached England soon after and Germany around 1815. Their basic (and very innovative) principle was the *mission society* as a *voluntary association* without (or even with) the blessing of the respective churches.⁶ The first of these classical missions was the Baptist Missionary Society, which William Carey organized in 1792.⁷ Like them the Church Missionary Society (CMS, Anglican, 1795) and the Methodists (1813) were organized along denominational lines. The missions were for their respective churches, but they were organized and operated independently of them. The only exception were the Scottish Presbyterian missions, which were part of the

⁴ For another discussion of the revival history which informs my typology, see Klaus Fiedler, *Missions as the Theology of the Church. An Argument from Malawi, Mzuzu*: Mzuni Press, 2015.

⁵ SPG and the Moravian Mission are the only ones. By joining with UMCA, SPG is now the United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (UMCA).

⁶ Andrew F. Walls, "Vom Ursprung der Missionsgesellschaften - oder: Die glückliche Subversion der Kirchen," *Evangelikale Missiologie*, 1987, pp. 35-40 and 56-60. *After that published as: Andrew Walls, "Missionary Societies and the Fortunate Subversion of the Church," *Evangelical Quarterly* 88:2 (1988), pp. 141-155.

⁷ The basic text is: William Carey, *An Enquiry into the Obligation of Christians to Use Means for the conversion of the Heathen*, Leicester: Ann Ireland, 1792 (several reprints).

ecclesiastical organizations.⁸ The names of the Classical Missions indicate origin, be it denominational or geographical.

The majority of the early Classical Missions was not denominational, but interdenominational. The first of these interdenominational Classical Missions was the [London] Missionary Society (LMS, 1795). Other such missions were the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM, 1810); Basel 1815; Paris (1819); Barmen 1828. The Classical interdenominational missions almost always have a name that indicates the geographical origin.

All interdenominational Classical Missions accepted missionaries (only) from churches that practiced infant baptism. Often these churches were organized as "territorial churches,"⁹ and their missionaries were, if required ordained by their respective churches.

All interdenominational Classical missions have undergone a decisive (and quick) process of denominationalization, so that there is no reason any more to distinguish among the Classical Missions between denominational and interdenominational. Virtually all the interdenominational Classical Missions today belong to the ecumenical groupings.

A special position is taken by the Specialized Classical Missions, of which the Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society [1841] was the first. Equally specialized was the Zenana Bible and Medical Mission, equally founded in Edinburgh (1852).¹⁰ In the USA the first of many specialized missions was the Woman's Union Missionary Society of America [1861].¹¹ The Specialized Classical Missions with their stronger individuality served in some aspects as an example for the Faith Missions. This idea is supported by the fact that two of the three Specialized Classical Missions later accepted the financial principles of the Faith Missions and joined Evangelical Mission Councils together with the post-classical missions. Even the predecessor of the China Inland Mission, the Chinese Evangelization Society, must be seen as

⁸ Still the "Foreign Mission Committees" were largely acting independently.

⁹ Such churches are the Anglicans in England, the Presbyterians in Scotland, and in Germany the Lutheran and Reformed Churches in their respective territories.

¹⁰ The current name is Interserve; before it was Bible and Medical Missionary Fellowship (BMMF). Since 1952 men may also join this Mission, which has grown much in recent years.

¹¹ *For a comprehensive study of this mission and the context of women's mission theology, see: Dana Roberts, *American Women in Mission. A Social History of their Thought and Practice*, Macon: Mercer University Press, 1996, esp. pp. 137-188.

Specialized Classical Mission, as it did not want to start churches like the Classical Missions, but wanted to simply evangelize China through Chinese evangelists distributing considerable amounts of literature.

During the second generation of the Classical Missions two new missions were founded, which can be seen as predecessors of the Evangelical Faith Missions. The first of these missions is the Goßner Mission (1836).¹² It developed ultimately into another Classical Mission,¹³ but it started, based on the "individual missionary's charismatic authority"¹⁴ with extremely limited structures (which was typical of Independent Missions (*Freimissionen*) but also with an authoritarian one-man-leadership which reminds of the authority of many founders of the Faith Missions. The other mission which foreshadowed in some ways the Faith Missions was the Pilgermission St. Chrischona (1840), which, consciously so, only employed non-ordained artisans to work the "Apostle's Road" from Jerusalem to Ethiopia, who in the Classical Missions could only have been assistants to the (ordained) missionaries.¹⁵

(3) The Evangelical missions formed the third big Protestant missionary movement. While the China Inland Mission and the Faith Missions that followed its pattern became the core of the Evangelical missionary movement, we need to take note of two predecessor movements which influenced the Faith Missions: the Independent Missions ("Free Missions") and the Non-Church Missions.

Independent missions ("Free Missions") are based on the individual missionary's calling, which makes him (sometimes her) responsible only to himself and God. The first Free Missionary of importance for the Faith

¹² For a detailed history of the Goßner Mission see: Walter Holsten, *Johannes Evangelista Goßner. Glaube und Gemeinde*, Göttingen 1949. Since the Goßner Mission archives were destroyed in the bombings of the Second World War, but after the author had finished his research, the book is now the closest source to the lost primary sources.

¹³ Walter Holsten, *Johannes Evangelista Goßner. Glaube und Gemeinde*, Göttingen 1949 p. 158ff.

¹⁴ Hans-Werner Gensichen, who developed this concept, uses the term "charismatisches Selbstrecht des Missionars."

¹⁵ The Goßner Mission has repeatedly been presented as an example for the Faith Missions. Rowland Bingham for example mentions Goßner and Harms and that the 'Faith Mission' movement really emanated from Germany (*The Missionary Witness* Oct 1914, 293), but I have not found any real direct influences.

Missions was Karl Gützlaff (1803-1851).¹⁶ In 1828 he left the Nederlandsch Zendelinggenootschap, which did not approve his work among the Chinese in Indonesia. To support Gützlaff's work, in December 1846 in Kassel the Chinese Foundation (Chinesische Stiftung) was founded,¹⁷ and in 1849 in Tottenham the Chinese Evangelization Society.¹⁸ Hudson Taylor was their missionary from 1854 to 1857 when he left the Chinese Evangelization Society to become an independent missionary.¹⁹

The other missionary movement, which influenced the Faith Missions, was the Christian Brethren Movement, with Anthony Norris Groves (1795-1853) as its first missionary, who went to Baghdad in 1829 and later worked in India.²⁰ Groves, a dentist by profession, had started training for the ordained ministry to become a CMS missionary, but he severed the connection when he realized that he could not be ordained by *one* denomination.²¹ He was very relieved when he found out that the New Testament does not require (and does not know) any ordination.²²

¹⁶ Gustav Warneck, *Evangelische Missionslehre. Ein missionstheoretischer Versuch*, vol 2, Gotha, 1897, p. 237.

¹⁷ The first detailed works on Gützlaff were: Herman Schlyter, *Karl Gützlaff als Missionar in China*, Lund 1946; Herman Schlyter, *Der China-Missionar Karl Gützlaff und seine Heimatbasis. Studien über das Interesse des Abendlandes an der Mission des China-Pioniers Karl Gützlaff und über seinen Einsatz als Missionserwecker*, Lund 1976.

¹⁸ For a detailed history and documentation of the Chinesische Stiftung see: Günter Bezzenberger, *Mission in China. Die Geschichte der Chinesischen Stiftung*, Kassel 1979. The Chinesische Stiftung was not a Classical Missions, as Gützlaff was in no way responsible to it. For the end of the Chinesische Stiftung [1858] see pp. 136-138.

¹⁹ For the organizations in Britain that supported Gützlaff and on how the China Inland Mission/Overseas Missionary Fellowship saw him: A.J. Broomhall, *Barbarians at the Gates*, London/Sevenoaks, 1981, p. 323-349.

²⁰ James Hudson Taylor, *Retrospect*, London ¹⁸1974, p. 95f [The text is the text of the first London 1894 edition]; cf A.J. Broomhall, *If I had a Thousand Lives*, Sevenoaks, 1982.

²¹ Anthony Norris Groves, *Memoir of Anthony Norris Groves, compiled chiefly from his journals and letters, to which is added a supplement, containing recollections of Miss Paget, and accounts of missionary works in India, etc. by his widow*, London 1869. His biography is: G.H. Lang, *Anthony Norris Groves*, London 1949. *This was typical for the nascent Restorationist Revival, which attempted to unite all Christians by making them "come out" of their denominations. For a recent study

In some way the Faith Missions can be understood to be the *heirs* of several ideas from the Independent Missions and the Brethren Missions, like the idea that a missionary is only responsible to God for his call or that the financing of the missionary work is based on faith alone. True as that is, to me the Faith Missions seem to be more a *correction* of principles that with the Independents and the Brethren had become one-sided and by implication restrictive.

The Faith Missions differ from the Classical Missions most of all in that they have a different spiritual background. They were not children of the Great Awakening (18th century), but of the next major revival, which I call the Holiness Revival and others call the Evangelical Revival or the Second Great Awakening (19th century).²³ The Faith Missions had (and have) quite a different relationship to the churches, which is much broader than that of the Classical Missions. While the interdenominational Classical Missions only accepted missionaries from churches with infant baptism, in the Faith Missions missionaries from churches with believers' baptism are equally welcome and they work together on an equal footing. In the Faith Missions individual missionaries work together. They do not represent the churches they come from, neither officially nor unofficially.

(4) The birth of the Pentecostal Revival (1906) made it clear that the Holiness Revival (Second Evangelical Awakening) was not the last revival. The Pentecostal Missions have much in common with the Faith Missions, especially in methods and structures, and Faith Missions and Pentecostal Missions often cooperate on the mission fields, and in most countries both groups belong to the same organizations, but still, they have a different spirituality and a different historical background.²⁴ The most recent revival

see: Robert Bernard Dann, *Father of Faith Missions. The Life and Times of Anthony Norris Groves (1795-1853)*, Waynesboro/Bletchley, 2004.

²² "One day the thought was brought to my mind, that ordination of any kind to preach the gospel is no requirement of Scripture. To me it was a removal of a mountain" (p. 42).

²³ *For an expanded treatment of the revival connection see Klaus Fiedler, "Mission als Theologie der Kirche und Missionen als Kinder der Erweckung," *Evangelikale Missiologie*, 27, 2/2011, pp. 61-78 and Klaus Fiedler, *Missions as the Theology of the Church*, Mzuzu: Mzuni Press, 2012.

²⁴ There is only one Pentecostal Faith Mission, the Örebro Missionsförening. It originated as a fellowship in the Holiness Movement, turned Baptist and did not leave the Faith Mission movement when the experience of Spirit baptism was

(the Charismatic Movement, 1960), crisscrossing all denominations, is still too recent to allow for a proper classification of their activities in world missions. As the Charismatic Movement was born in one of the classical denomination and spread originally mainly among them, several of such Charismatic missionaries have joined the missions of their denominations. After the initial spread within the classical denominations, specific Charismatic denominations (networks, groups, churches) have started forming and from them emanates a small but growing missionary movement.²⁵

As with all typologies, the typology I present here is not the only possibility, but as its basic elements can be perceived in all standard mission histories, there are good arguments in its favour. For me this typology is highly relevant for the current missiological discourse. I do not see mission history as the history of a single and unified movement, which later (unfortunately) diverged and split (maybe in Edinburgh 1910 or New Delhi 1961), but as a sequence of missionary movements, each being born from its own revival. Therefore I do not see the current Evangelical Missions as a split off from the Classical missionary movement, nor do I see them as the (true) heirs of that movement, but as representatives of a separate and distinct missionary movement, which has its roots in a very specific revival movement, namely the Second Evangelical Awakening (Holiness Revival) of the second half of the 19th century.

These reflections yield a preliminary result: The AEM (Association of Evangelical Missions) of both Switzerland and Germany represents a very specific missionary movement with a specific historical inheritance and a theology (and missiology) determined by that historical background.

This led me to formulate the following theses:

(1) The Evangelical Missions as a whole have largely ignored or denied their own historical inheritance, with little importance being given even to the writing of their own history. Most Evangelical missions are little aware of their historical peculiarities and what their history means for them.

accepted. (Of course there were many Pentecostal missions which followed the "faith principle," but they came from a different revival).

²⁵ *For a recent treatment of these developments see: Felix Nyika, "From Revival to Apostolic Networks: The Historic Development of Malawian Neocharismatic Churches," *Religion and Culture*, no 1, Nov 2013, pp. 1-22.

(2) Instead of studying, appropriating and further developing what they inherited from their founders, they have often identified with the theology and history of the Classical Missions.

(3) This process of neglect has produced a loss of Evangelical identity and led to the conviction that the Evangelical Missions are the rightful heirs of the Warnecks, the Richters, and the Hartensteins.²⁶

(4) Stressing Evangelical identity in such a context led, through negations, to unnecessary conflicts and to theological borrowing from mission theologies that were not Evangelical and that started from non-evangelical assumptions.

(5) Through the process described in the first four points, the Evangelical missions have lost much of their (theological) richness. The 125 year jubilee I take as the appropriate occasion to address anew three important issues: The historical heritage, the theological heritage and Evangelical identity. I will now try to explain further these three points.

The historical heritage of the Faith Missions

As there is not enough time and space, even to give a brief overview of the history of the Faith Missions, I can only give some insights. Best known in the history of the Faith Missions is Hudson Taylor, and as much research has been done on the history of the China Inland Mission, it must suffice to refer to the literature²⁷ and to list the points in which Hudson Taylor (and with him the early Faith Missions) differed from the *principles* of the Classical Missions.

²⁶ *Gustav Warneck was the great systematic theologian of missions, Julius Richter the most prominent mission historian of his days, and Karl Hartenstein represents the next generation of Classical missiologists.

²⁷ *The classical biography was written by daughter in law and son: Geraldine and Howard Taylor, *Hudson Taylor in Early Years. The Growth of a Soul*, London 1911; *Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission: The Growth of a Work of God*, London 1918. New aspects can be found in: John Pollock, *Hudson Taylor and Maria. Pioneers in China*, London 1962. The new and big biography and CIM history is: A.J. Broomhall, *Hudson Taylor and China's Open Century*, 7 vols, 1981-1989, about 3000 pages, and as paperbacks very affordable.

The basic principles of the China Inland Mission

1. The mission is interdenominational. Missionaries from all Protestant churches can become members if they agree to the simple statement of faith.²⁸
2. Church order is a secondary issue. Problems of church order may be solved in pragmatic ways.
3. Missionaries are not employees, but members of the mission.
4. Missionaries receive no salary, but expect that God will supply their every need through the hands of his children ("faith principle").
5. Missionaries with any type of training are equally welcome.
6. There is no difference between ordained and unordained missionaries.
7. Wives are full missionaries and all possibilities open to men are open to them as well.
8. Single women have the same possibilities as men. They may work on their own as pioneer evangelists.
9. Missionaries identify as far as at all possible with the culture of their host country. As a sign of this identification they wear Chinese dress.
10. Missionaries must be willing to accept sacrifice and suffering.
11. In missionary work evangelism takes precedence over institutional work.
12. It is the first priority of all evangelistic work to give everyone at least one chance to hear the Gospel. Therefore evangelistic itineration must receive special attention.
13. Converts are to be joined into local congregations and to be used to further evangelism.
14. The mission is international.
15. Leadership is centralistic. The mission is field-directed. Home Councils are only to represent the mission in a given country, not to direct the mission.

After Hudson Taylor the best known Faith Missions personality is C.T. Studd, the founder of WEC International. First he was an associate missionary of the China Inland Mission (one of the famous "Cambridge Seven"), then the pastor of an interdenominational congregation in India and from 1913 until his death in 1931 founder and leader of WEC (in the beginning Heart of Africa Mission), famous for the rigour with which he pursued his convictions, and for his difficult personality that resulted from that. He was made famous by his son in law (and successor as the leader of WEC)

²⁸ *When asked, Hudson Taylor affirmed that this was the very first Faith Mission distinctive, and in America the Faith Missions are often called "Interdenominational Missions."

Norman P. Grubb, who was an important Faith Mission author²⁹ and who managed to separate the spiritual truths which C.T. Studd had lived for from his difficult personality. He was not only a good author but also a good organizer. He gave WEC its international structure and motivated it to ever new advances. Therefore it is appropriate to speak of two founders of WEC International. But even two is not really correct, as Priscilla Studd was the one who gave the WEC home base its existence and its international organizational structure.³⁰

The founding of WEC in 1913 completed the first phase in the history of the Faith Missions. The First World War brought missionary expansion to a halt, and the economic and spiritual depression between the two World Wars, though allowing for some expansion, did not produce any new departures. Such a new departure came after the end of the Second World War. Even for this period no overview is possible, so I just mention a few names to show the direction: First there were three missions that added new aspects to the work of the Faith Missions: The New Tribes Mission, the Wycliffe Bible Translators and the Christian Nationals Evangelism Commission. Second, this period saw a much enhanced expansion of the Faith Missions on the European Continent. The third new development is that during the last 40 years the sending bases of the Faith Missions have become truly international, so that missionaries of all races now work in them, and equally there are Faith Missions with home bases in the countries of the Two Thirds World.³¹

²⁹ These are a few titles: *C.T. Studd. Cricketer and Pioneer*, London 1933; *After C.T. Studd*, London 1939; *The Story of Jack Harrison*, London 1949; *Continuous Revival*, London 1952; *Die 4 Säulen des WEK [The four Pillars of WEC]*, St. Gallen 1965; *Edith Moules - die Mutter der Aussätzigen*, Basel nd; *J.D. Drysdale, Prophet of Holiness*, London 1955; *Once Caught, No Escape. My Life Story*, Ft Washington 1963.

³⁰ Eileen Vincent, *C.T. Studd and Priscilla. United to Fight for Jesus*, Bromley/Gerrards Cross/Eastbourne 1988. *See also Klaus Fiedler, "Frauen in Glaubensmissionen," *Weltweit*, 4.2013, p. 26.

³¹ Their numbers, though, are much smaller than Keyes' big claims, because the questionnaires, on which the "research" was based, were largely misunderstood by those who filled them in (and which Keyes did not even realize). *For details see: Klaus Fiedler, "Wo sind die 20.000? Eine kritische Analyse von Lawrence E. Keyes Konzept der 'transkulturellen Drittweltmissionare' und der ihm zugrundeliegenden Daten," *Evangelikale Missiologie* 1989, pp. 37-40.

After this excursion into the present let me go back to the founding period of the Faith Missions. I want to introduce four persons who were important in shaping the new missionary movement.

(1) Fanny Guinness (1832-1898)³²

Together with her husband Grattan she was crucial in giving the new Faith Missions their distinct shape. She founded in 1878 the second Faith Mission (and the first in Africa) and led it until the Livingstone Inland Mission³³ was handed over to the American Baptist Missionary Society in 1884. After 1889 she shared the responsibility for the Congo Balolo Mission.³⁴

In 1873 she founded, together with her husband, the first Evangelical Bible School, the East London Training Institute (ELTI).³⁵ Like the Missionsseminare (Mission Seminaries) of the Classical Missions, ELTI, in the beginning, only trained (male) men. But there was a difference: While both ELTI and the classical seminaries accepted men without secondary education, the seminaries offered a course of several years in theology (classical languages often included), the training at ELTI was a practical training in evangelism (at home and abroad) lasting from a few months to a few years depending on the students' needs and wishes. The original name was therefore "Missionary Training Institute." Because the theological approach used ignored the classical languages, starting directly with the English Bible, such Evangelical missionary training institutes became known,

³² Unfortunately there is no biography yet of Fanny Guinness. But this excellent book can meanwhile serve as a biography of both Fanny and Lucy Guinness: Michelle Guinness, *The Guinness Legend*, London/Sydney/Auckland/Toronto: Hodder and Stoughton, 1990.

³³ *Fanny Guinness started the mission after Henry Morton Stanley's 999 days' journey from East Africa to the mouth of the Congo. Stanley, an admirer of David Livingstone, proposed that the river be renamed after him. Fanny Guinness assumed that in the name of her mission.

³⁴ Later, together with Missions in Peru and Bihar, it carried the name Regions Beyond Missionary Union.

³⁵ Further Missionary Training Institutions (Bible Schools) originating from or being strongly influenced by ELTI were: New York Missionary Training Institute (founded in 1883 by A.B. Simpson; now in Nyack); Boston Missionary Training Institute (founded in 1889 by A.J. Gordon, one of the leading Faith Mission publicists, now part of Gordon-Conwell University); Moody Bible Institute, Chicago (founded by Emma Dryer as Missionary Training Institutes of the Chicago Evangelization Society); Missionsseminar Neukirchen (Ludwig Doll, 1882).

probably starting in America, sometimes derogatively, as "Bible Schools."³⁶ Soon Fanny Guinness became unhappy that only men should be trained, so she opened a female wing, Doric Lodge (1885).³⁷ Besides her practical and organizational work for the missionary cause, she also assisted in the founding of the North Africa Mission (1881, today Arab World Ministries) and of the Qua Iboe Mission in Nigeria (1887). Fanny Guinness spent much time writing. Well known was her magazine *Regions Beyond* and her history of the Livingstone Inland Mission.³⁸

(2) Lucy Guinness

She was one of the eight children of Fanny and Grattan Guinness, and she seems to have inherited her literary abilities from her mother. As a girl she was involved in evangelism in the mission halls related to ELTI, but also in the (female) Factory Workers' Club. To empathize better with the situation they were in, she worked for a number of weeks *incognito* in a factory.³⁹ Later she agitated for the rights of Protestants to evangelize in Catholic South America⁴⁰ and helped start a faith mission in hitherto unreached Bihar in India. In 1900 she married the German Karl Kumm, a former missionary of the North Africa Mission, whose aim it was to evangelize the Sudan Belt which up to then had hardly been touched, even at the fringes, by any Christian mission.⁴¹ To achieve that they started the Sudan-Pionier-Mission (later Evangelische Mission in Oberägypten), but already in 1902 Karl Kumm was dismissed by its leadership. The Kumms then moved to

³⁶ This interpretation looks likely to me, but I do not have source evidence for all of it.

³⁷ In her first call for students she wrote: "We are increasingly convinced of the importance of well-trained female agents among the heathen, and of the facts that multitudes of women who have the natural and spiritual qualifications ... are wasting their time at home here in England" (*The Regions Beyond* 1885, 110).

³⁸ Fanny E. Guinness, *The First Christian Mission in the Congo*, London 1880 [expanded edition: ⁴1882].

³⁹ Lucy Guinness, *Only a Factory Girl*, London 1886.

⁴⁰ Lucy Guinness and E.C. Millard, *South America. The Neglected Continent*, London, 1894.

⁴¹ *For a deep study of all the attempts to reach the unreached Sudan Belt see: Christof Sauer, *Reaching the Unreached Sudan Belt. Guinness, Kumm, and the Sudan-Pionier-Mission*, PhD, UNISA, 2001. Published as: Christof Sauer, *Reaching the Unreached Sudan Belt: Guinness, Kumm and the Sudan-Pionier-Mission*, Nürnberg: VTR, 2005.

England, where they started the Lightbearers' League, which developed in 1904 into the Sudan United Mission.⁴² Through her energy (and probably also through her charm) she brought the major British Free Churches to support the venture, though they were all absorbed in their own missions, having no money or personnel to spare for a new mission. She was equally engaged in the fight against the Congo Atrocities, in which her brother and father played a leading role.⁴³ She died of a fallopian tube pregnancy in 1906 in Northfield (Moody's birthplace) in the USA, where she had gone to promote the work of the Sudan United Mission. Her last engagement, almost to the point of her death, was to write a book against the Congo Atrocities.⁴⁴

(3) Rowland Bingham (1872-1942)

Bingham is known as the founder of the Sudan Interior Mission (and thereby also of the second largest church with a Faith Mission origin, ECWA [Evangelical Congregations of West Africa, ca 1975 1330 Gemeinden,

⁴² The original name was Sudan Pioneer Mission, but when they realized that they were not the *very first* pioneers there, the name was changed.

⁴³ Grattan Guinness, *The Congo Crisis*, London 1908 [Special Edition of *Regions Beyond*, Jan.-Feb. 1908].

⁴⁴ Her book was never published, if at all it was finished. What material she dealt with can be guessed from her father's writings: In May 1896 Harry Guinness travelled to Brussels to intervene with Leopold II. He related to the king what he had learned from Bolenge. Among other things he told him: "On December 14th, 1895, my friend, Mrs. Banks, had been crossing the station compound at Bolenge when she saw a poor woman being beaten by a native sentry, and on enquiring what the matter, the sentry replied 'She has lost one!' 'One what?' enquired Mrs. Banks. 'Why, one of the hands,' said the sentry. And then Mrs. Banks noticed that the basket on the back of the woman was filled with human hands. She immediately called her husband and Mr. Sjöblom, who happened to be on the station at the time, and the hands were counted in their presence. There were eighteen in all, and the angry sentry still asserted that there ought to have been nineteen! Some of these smoked hands were those of children, some of women, and some of men. And undoubtedly most of them had belonged to relatives of the unfortunate woman who was carrying them. 'Where are you taking these?' asked one of the missionaries. 'To the White man' (the State man), 'to whom I have to prove that I have been diligent in pushing the rubber business, and who would punish me, if I did not compel the people to bring in a sufficient quantity'." (Grattan Guinness, *The Congo Crisis*, London 1908, pp. 17-18.)

500,000 Mitglieder]⁴⁵ His denominational career is typical for most Faith Mission founders. He was born in a Free Church family in Sussex and experienced his conversion through the Salvation Army, which he then joined. In 1888 he emigrated to Canada, where he encountered John Salmon, pastor of an independent church in Toronto and founder of a fellowship movement, the Christian and Missionary Alliance. He became Salmon's pastoral assistant. In 1893, listening to Adoniram Judson Gordon's lectures on "The Holy Spirit and Missions" and meeting Mrs Gowans, whose daughter was in charge of the Christian Missionary Alliance mission in Beijing, he embraced the plans of Walter Gowans to evangelize the Sudan Belt. In 1893, after minimal preparations, he started an Independent Mission with the aim to reach Lake Chad starting out from Nigeria, which faltered due to insufficient equipment and the deaths of Walter Gowans and Tom Kent. Returned to Canada, he became a Baptist. There he did not start a Baptist mission, but the interdenominational Sudan Interior Mission. This failed again, but in 1902 it finally managed to get a foothold, at first in Central Nigeria. Today Sudan Interior Mission (now SIM International) is one of the largest Faith Missions. While Bingham separated from the Christian Missionary Alliance because of its specific holiness teaching, he still remained a supporter of the holiness teaching (which interest he showed in founding Canadian Keswick in 1924). The Sudan Interior Mission has established an archive in Toronto, but so far I have not come across any research or publication on the theology or missiology of Rowland Bingham.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ The missiologist Panya Baba, Jos, is the Head of the ECWA mission society, the EMS (Evangelical Missionary Society).

⁴⁶ Some of Bingham's publications are: "Modern Industrial Missions. A Plea for Self-supporting and Self-propagating Industrial Missions in Africa," *The Faithful Witness* 19.7.1898; *Seven Sevens of Years and a Jubilee. The Story of the Sudan Interior Mission*, Toronto, nd [1958]; *The Bible and the Body. Healing in the Scriptures*, London/Edinburgh ⁴1952 (¹1921, ³1939); *The Pentecost Plan or The Manna Method of Missionary Maintenance*, Toronto, nd; "Unity the Key Word - But at too Great a Cost," *The Missionary Witness* 1910, p. 27 (on Edinburgh 1910); "Why Work Interdenominationally?" in: *The Evangelical Christian*, Jan 1913, p. 4. *For a biography see: Jeanett and Geoff Bengé, *Into Africa's Interior*, Seattle: YWAM Publishing, 2003.

(4) A.B. Simpson (1843-1919)

The research situation is much better for A.B. Simpson, the founder of the American fellowship movement, the Christian Alliance and of the interdenominational Faith Mission, the Evangelical Missionary Alliance (1887), which he combined in 1897 to form the Christian and Missionary Alliance, which is now a worldwide mission and church. While the first biographies of A.B. Simpson have hagiographic tendencies,⁴⁷ there is now a well researched and well written history of the Christian Missionary Alliance.⁴⁸ In addition there is a book with a collection of major essays on the A.B. Simpson's theology and missiology.⁴⁹

Why should a missiologist be interested in A.B. Simpson? For once because of his contribution to the history of the early Faith Missions. Like Fanny Guinness he published a well illustrated mission journal (*The Gospel in All Lands*), changed like Hudson Taylor his denominational allegiance (though not as often), started like Grattan Guinness a school for missionaries (the New York Missionary Training Institute) and like with Rowland Bingham the first attempt at missions failed (not in Nigeria, but in Congo) due to similar illusions and insufficient preparation and equipment.

It could also be interesting to find out how his ideal of the independent local church produced strictly organized churches of a Presbyterian type. Of more importance may be his teaching on the Fourfold Gospel, proclaiming Christ as Saviour, Healer, Sanctifier and Coming King, combining different revival streams of the second half of the 19th century.⁵⁰ It would be worthwhile to find out how the revival tenets of holiness and healing are faring among Evangelicals these days what influences from A.B. Simpson have been absorbed by the Pentecostal Movement (Pentecostal terms like Foursquare Gospel or Full Gospel warrant such inquiry). It would also be interesting to find out why A.B. Simpson, different from his successors, did

⁴⁷ This is already expressed in one title: Aiden Wilson Tozer, *Wingspread. Albert B. Simpson. A Study in Spiritual Altitude*, Harrisburg PA, 1943.

⁴⁸ Robert Niklaus, John S. Sawin, Samuel J. Stoesz, *All For Jesus. God at Work in the Christian and Missionary Alliance Over One Hundred Years*, Camp Hill, 1986.

⁴⁹ David F. Hartzfeld; Charles Nienkirchen, *The Birth of a Vision. Essays by members of the faculty of Canadian Bible College and the faculty of Canadian Theological Seminary Regina, Saskatchewan the official College and Seminary of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada on the occasion of the Centennial of the Christian and Missionary Alliance 1887-1987*, Regina 1986.

⁵⁰ Albert B. Simpson, *The Fourfold Gospel*, New York, nd [ca 1895].

not share the "any moment" expectation of Christ's second coming, but saw it as "imminent," though not yet.

(5) These four names may be taken to represent the other founders of Faith Missions like Fredrik Franson (Allianz Missionen, TEAM),⁵¹ Alma Doering (Congo Inland Mission, Unevangelized Tribes Mission), Peter Cameron Scott (Africa Inland Mission),⁵² John Ongman (Örebromissionen), Héli Chatelin (Mission Philafricaine, today part of Schweizer Allianzmission). For the German speaking areas two names may be sufficient: Ludwig Doll (Neukirchen Mission) and Heinrich Coerper (Liebenzell).

The theological and missiological inheritance of the Faith Missions

It is not possible to present briefly the theology of such a complex movement as the Faith Missions. So I will show some lines which may help us to understand. For the practical approach to missions I may refer again to the 15 principles of the early China Inland Mission, which are important for all subsequent Faith Missions, if only sometimes as principles that have finally to be discarded. These principles allow valid access to the Faith Missions' theology, but I want to attempt a historical approach to their theology by analyzing the Faith Mission movement's relationship to three movements which prepared the Second Evangelical Awakening, shaped the Awakening's theology (with its diversity) and, as a consequence, also the Faith Missions (thereby differentiating them strongly from the Classical Missions and their theology). There were three such movements, and I will treat them in this order, concentrating on those theological elements that they contributed to the Faith Missions: The Brethren Movement, the Holiness Movement and the Prophetic Movement.

⁵¹ Edvard Torjesen, "Fredrik Franson," *Evangelikale Missiologie* 1988,55f.

⁵² There is no (even halfway) convincing biography of Scott, and the title of the "official" history of the AIM seems to indicate its academic quality: Kenneth Richardson, *Garden of Miracles. The Story of the Africa Inland Mission*, London 1976 (1968).

(1) The Brethren Movement⁵³

Typical for the Brethren is their theology of the common priesthood, which most Christians (including Evangelicals) see as extreme. The Brethren (at least in their theology) do not recognize any office in the church,⁵⁴ and "church" for them never means a denomination, but the local assembly, which is the highest (and only) organizational structure acknowledged in their theology. This means that there is also, for the Brethren (at least in their theology), no room for any missionary society.⁵⁵

Hudson Taylor was, like his parents, a Methodist, and when Barnsley Methodist Church split in 1849, he opted, together with his parents, for the reform branch (reviving the old Methodist holiness teaching),⁵⁶ which resulted in the Methodist Free Church.⁵⁷ But soon he established contact to the Brethren assembly in Barnsley, seeking a wider Christian unity of all of God's children, not defined by the denominations and their cooperation (or lack of it). In 1851 he joined the Brethren assembly in Hull led by Andrew

⁵³ *When I presented this chapter as a paper in 1991, I saw the Brethren as a stand alone movement. A few years later I discovered that the Brethren were part of a wider movement, the Restorationist Revival, with strong non-church connotations. For this see my article "A Revival Disregarded and Disliked" in Klaus W. Müller (ed), *Mission in fremden Kulturen*. Nürnberg: Verlag für Theologie und Religionswissenschaft, 2003; and Klaus Fiedler, "'A Revival Disregarded and Disliked' or What do Seventh-day Adventists, Churches of Christ, Jehovah's Witnesses and the New Apostolic Church have in Common?" *Religion in Malawi*, no 15, 2009, pp. 10-19, reproduced in this book.

⁵⁴ *They also know no ordination. On the other extreme are most mainline churches and the Ecumenical Movement, which attempts to achieve Christian unity (through the Lima process) by a worldwide acceptance of the threefold office of bishops, priests and deacons.

⁵⁵ *This was a heavy debate equally among the Churches of Christ, which in the end came out against mission societies (for this see chapter 2 of Mark Thiesen's PhD on the Churches of Christ (Mzuzu University, forthcoming).

⁵⁶ "With regard to my denominational views: at first I joined the Wesleyan Methodists, as my parents and friends were members of that body. But not being able to reconcile the late proceedings with the doctrines and precepts of Holy Scripture, I withdrew, and am at present united to the branch Society" (Hudson Taylor - George Pearse 25.4.1851, full text in: Geraldine and Howard Taylor, *Hudson Taylor in Early Years. The Growth of a Soul*, London 1911, p. 101-104 [104]).

⁵⁷ *This Methodist Free Church had similarities with the current Free Methodist Church, but is not the same body.

Jukes, which had a close relationship to George Müller, the leading voice of the Open Brethren.⁵⁸ There he was also (re-)baptized.⁵⁹ While studying medicine in London he belonged to the Brook Street Brethren Assembly in Tottenham (founded 1838).⁶⁰

The best known influence from the Brethren is the "faith principle" of funding missionary work,⁶¹ which later gave the new missions their (nick-) name. The idea to look only to God for the support of the missionary work seems to have come to Hudson Taylor through George Müller, but it was first developed by Anthony Norris Groves, when he travelled to Baghdad in 1828 as the first of many Brethren missionaries.⁶² From the Brethren Hudson Taylor also took the concept of "individual unity" which made it possible for him to accept missionaries from all denominations, without asking their churches for consent or anything else. It also made it possible for him to ascribe minor importance to contradicting theological issues like ecclesiology, ordination or baptism, topics that could be relegated to local solutions on the mission field. Even the idea of Hudson Taylor to accept missionaries with all types of training (and even without) resonates well with Brethren ideas as does his decision that the headquarters of the mission must not be in Europe or America, but right on the mission field. The same applies to the concept that the missionaries are not employees of the missions (as in the Classical Missions) but members.

Hudson Taylor took many of his innovative ideas from his Brethren background, and therefore it is important to note that he avoided the narrowness which he found among the Brethren. He did not follow them in their practice to exhibit the non-denominational flag, but in many ways to

⁵⁸ Geraldine and Howard Taylor, *Hudson Taylor in Early Years. The Growth of a Soul*, London 1911, p. 101-104.

⁵⁹ A.J. Broomhall, *Over the Treaty Wall*, p. 42, 46.

⁶⁰ Geraldine and Howard Taylor, *Hudson Taylor in Early Years. The Growth of a Soul*, London 1911, p. 115-118. It has been argued that Hudson Taylor had contacts to the Brethren, but never became a member. This misunderstanding may have come about because the Christian Brethren as a non-church movement knew no official membership. De facto membership was constituted by local residence and admission to the Breaking of the Bread. Both applied to Hudson Taylor (F. Roy Coad, *A History of the Brethren Movement*, Exeter: Paternoster, 1968, p. 76).

⁶¹ Anthony Norris. Groves, *Seid nicht besorgt. Das Glück eines abhängigen Lebens [Christian Devotedness]*, Bielefeld, 1988.

⁶² *Robert Bernard Dann, *Father of Faith Missions. The Life and Times of Anthony Norris Groves (1795-1853)*, Waynesboro/Bletchley: Authentic Media, 2004.

behave like any other denomination. While the Brethren established their organizational structures under pretexts (like conferences, mission journals, publishing), he did not shy away from establishing an effective mission organization, and he was able to keep a profitable tension between the missionary's direct responsibility to God and his authority as the director of the mission.⁶³

(2) The Holiness Movement⁶⁴

Hudson Taylor's parents were devoted Methodists. His conversion at the age of 15 in 1849 took place within this church and its theology.⁶⁵ Through his Methodist background he had a grounding in the traditional holiness teaching, but there were also connections to the new wave of holiness teaching. In 1849 he was so impressed by the article "The Beauty of Holiness"⁶⁶ that he began to yearn for entire sanctification.⁶⁷ One afternoon in December 1849 he had an experience of divine presence,⁶⁸ which he did

⁶³ *Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, London: Penguin, 1990 (1964), p. 283: "Like his contemporary William Booth, this young man calmly assumed to himself an almost papal authority."

⁶⁴ The origins of the Holiness Movement can be seen in the holiness experiences of the two sisters Sarah Lankford (1806-1896) and Phoebe Palmer (1804-1883) in 1835 (Richard Wheatley, *Life and Letters of Mrs. Phoebe Palmer*, New York 1876; Ernest Wall, "I Commend unto you Phoebe" in: *Religion in Life* 1957, pp. 396-408). The theological background can be found in John Wesley's concepts of entire sanctification (pure love driving out sin, Christian perfection, sinless perfection) which in turn has roots in Catholic mystic piety (William Law, Madame Guyon).

⁶⁵ Hudson Taylor, *Retrospect*, London, ¹⁸1974, pp. 11-13.

⁶⁶ "The Beauty of Holiness. A Letter to the Newark Presbytery, by a Pastor of the Free Presbyterian Church, Newark, NJ, America" in: *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, [Nov] 1849, pp. 1144-1150; 1270-1274.

⁶⁷ Hudson Taylor - Amelia Taylor 2.12.1849 in: A.J. Broomhall, *Barbarians at the Gates*, 1981, p. 354.

⁶⁸ "Well do I remember, as in unreserved consecration I put myself, my life, my friends, my all, upon the altar, the deep solemnity that came over my soul with the assurance that my offering was accepted. The presence of God became unutterably real and blessed; and though but a child under sixteen, I remember stretching myself on the ground, and lying there silent before Him with unspeakable awe and unspeakable joy" (Hudson Taylor, *Retrospect*, London, ¹⁸1974, p. 15).

not call "entire sanctification," but which showed all the signs of a holiness experience.⁶⁹

Much of the power of the 1858/9 revival came from the Holiness Movement. This becomes clear in its second phase of the revival (from 1873 onwards) in which the dominant figure was the evangelist Dwight L. Moody. He was an evangelist indeed, but he also had a message for the believers, asking them for a second step of faith, for which often the term "spirit baptism" was used.⁷⁰ The personal background to this was a dramatic holiness experience which he had in 1871,⁷¹ after two women from the Holiness Movement (Mrs Sarah Anne Cooke, a Free Methodist⁷² and a Mrs

⁶⁹ He dedicated his whole life to God and experienced a deep stillness. He felt that God had accepted his dedication, and he "heard" like a voice speaking to him, the words "Then go for me to China." Hudson Taylor rarely spoke of this experience. This explains why records of it do not tally in all details. (See Geraldine and Howard Taylor, *Hudson Taylor in Early Years. The Growth of a Soul*, London 1911, p. 78f; Hudson Taylor, *Retrospect* p. 15ff; A.J. Broomhall, *Barbarians at the Gates* p. 353-355).

⁷⁰ Cf Dwight Lyman Moody, *Secret Power; or, The Secret of Success in Christian Life and Christian Work*, Chicago 1881; *Power from on High*, London, nd.

⁷¹ In several biographies of Moody we find little about this experience. The popular biography by Faith Coxe Bailey (Dwight L. Moody, *Der größte Evangelist des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Asslar 1984 [Chicago (Moody Bible Institute) 1959] ascribes this deep change in Moody's life to his visit to Britain in 1867, where George Müller, Charles Haddon Spurgeon and Henry Varley impressed him (p. 103). His "Spirit baptism" is not mentioned at all. The best current biography (John Pollock, *Moody Without Sankey*, London et al, 1983[1963]) does not make this mistake (p. 82-87). "Moody locked the door and sat on the sofa. The room seemed ablaze with God. He dropped to the floor and lay bathing his soul in the Divine ... 'I can only say that God revealed himself to me, and I had such an experience of His love that I had to ask Him to stay His hand ... I was all the time tugging and carrying water. But now I have a river that carries me'... Crazy Moody became Moody the man of God" (p. 87).

⁷² The Free Methodist Church of America was founded in 1860 as a holiness denomination, it has about 10000 full members. Literature: Charles Edwin Jones, *A Guide to the Study of the Holiness Movement*, Metuchen NJ, 1974, p. 306-325. *For the Free Methodist Church in Malawi see: Henry Church, *Theological Education that Makes a Difference. Church Growth in the Free Methodist Church in Malawi and Zimbabwe*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2002 and Bernard Kalukusha, *The History of the Free Methodist Church in Malawi from 1969 to 2011*, MA, Mzuzu University, 2013. The Free Methodist Church early promoted the admission of women to the ordained ministry, see: Bernard Kalukusha, *Ordination of Women in the Free*

Hawxhurst) had awakened such a desire in him.⁷³ This happened just two years before his evangelistic trip to Britain which made him the most famous evangelist of his generation. Though he did not appeal for missionaries, his appeal for full dedication encouraged many people to become missionaries.

The Holiness Movement in Britain culminated in two conferences: Oxford (1874)⁷⁴ and Brighton (1875).⁷⁵ The now famous name "Keswick Conference" is derived from the name of a village in Southern England where every year the Holiness Conferences take place.⁷⁶ The Holiness Movement taught, as Wesley had done before, that sanctification is a second crisis experience, different from conversion, and that holiness is not a gradual and tedious process, but a sudden gift from God. This second crisis experience consists of three steps: full surrender, being filled with the Spirit, and power for service.

The Faith Missions took important elements from the Holiness Movement, some even contradicting Brethren theology. Besides the teaching about the deeper/higher/victorious Christian life described here,⁷⁷

Methodist Church in New York and Its Impact on Free Methodist Church in Malawi, MA module, Mzuzu University, 2010.

⁷³ John Pollock, *Moody Without Sankey*, London et al, ²1983(1963), p. 83.

⁷⁴ *Account of the Union Meeting for the Promotion of Scriptural Holiness, Held at Oxford, Aug. 29 to Sept 7, 1874*, London 1874, Boston/New York 1874.

⁷⁵ The conference had 6000 participants. 1000 ministers participated in the Oxford 1874 conference (Samuel J. Stoesz, "The Doctrine of Sanctification in the Thought of A.B. Simpson" in: Hartzfeld/Nienkirchen, *The Birth of a Vision*, p. 107-123 [p. 110]). The extraordinary atmosphere of this conference has been best captured in: J.B. Figgis, *Keswick from Within*, London/Edinburgh/New York, nd [1914] p. 21-47.

⁷⁶ One of the first presentations of Keswick history was written on request of Hannah Whitall Smith: J.B. Figgis, *Keswick from Within*, London/Edinburgh/New York, nd [1914]. The official history is: J.C. Pollock, *The Keswick Story. The Authorized History of the Keswick Convention*, London, 1964.

⁷⁷ Ruth Paxson of the China Inland Mission brought this teaching to Beatenberg Bible School (Ruth Paxson, *Life on the Highest Plane*, 3 vols in one, Chicago, 1928 [*Das Leben im Geist; Christus und die Gläubigen; Der Heilige Geist und die Gläubigen*, all: Dinglingen, 1932]). Just like Cyrus Ingersoll Scofield, Gertrud Wasserzug was at the same time an adherent of both Dispensationalism and the Holiness Movement. *For Ruth Paxson's (somewhat disruptive) influence on the Belgian Gospel Mission see: Aaldert Prins, *The History of the Belgian Gospel Mission (1918 – 1962)*, PhD, Evangelical Theological Faculty, Leuven, 2015.

an important characteristic of the Holiness Movement (going equally back to John Wesley) was the active and often independent position of women in the church, not only in (humble) service, but also in preaching and teaching. For this reason Fanny Guinness had included the women in the training at ELTI, and this is why the Evangelical training institutions were (and are) co-educative. But more dramatic was Hudson Taylor's decision to take missionary wives as full and equal missionaries, and to give single women the same opportunities as any other missionary had. The Classical Missions did count single women as missionaries, they were only missionary assistants.⁷⁸ For Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission (and with a declining tendency also in other Faith Missions) single women were full missionaries, able to fill any position, be it head of station or itinerating pioneer evangelist. Hudson Taylor allocated a whole area (the Kwangsin Valley, 300 km in length with 15 million inhabitants) to the single female missionaries from Canada.⁷⁹ There was nothing similar in the other Faith Missions, but "ladies' stations" were not infrequent. It is interesting to observe that in most faith missions the independent role of women has declined over the years.⁸⁰

(3) The Prophetic Movement

The Classical Missions followed Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758), the leading theologian of the Great Awakening, in his postmillennial eschatology,⁸¹

⁷⁸ In his missiology (*Evangelische Missionslehre*, vol II, Gotha, 1897) he considers women's preaching as "unhealthy and unscriptural" (p. 248). Women can only be missionaries' wives, or, if single, "missionary auxiliaries" (pp. 247; 249), just like artisans and doctors. In Warneck's statistical surveys missionary wives are not counted.

⁷⁹ Geraldine and Howard Taylor, *By Faith. Henry W. Frost and the China Inland Mission*, Singapore 1988 (1938), pp. 163-165. The Canadian single women missionaries did a commendable work, churches were born and schools were started. 3500 were baptized, and the churches produced their own leaders (Daniel W. Bacon, *From Faith to Faith. The Influence of Hudson Taylor on the Faith Missions Movement* [DMiss, Trinity, Deerfield 1983], Singapore 1984, p. 66).

⁸⁰ *This does not apply to Overseas Missionary Fellowship (formerly China Inland Mission) and WEC international. For the general observation see: Dana Roberts, *American Women in Mission. A Social History of their Thought and Practice*, Macon: Mercer University Press, 1996, pp. 189-254 [254].

⁸¹ C.C. Goen, "Jonathan Edwards: A New Departure in Eschatology" in: *Church History* XXVII (March 1959), 25-40. A precursor of Edwards was Daniel Whitby (1638-1725) with his: "A Treatise of the Millennium: Shewing That It Is Not a Reign

expecting Christ's second coming to take place after the Millennium, which in turn would be brought about through a gradual process of the world's conversion.⁸² In this process the revivals would play a major role but also the movements of social reforms.⁸³ This would not only mean the conversion of the nations,⁸⁴ but also a spread of Christian (Western) civilization.⁸⁵ This means that the work of the missions plays a role in bringing about the Millennium, but that the missionary work will be a part of a growth process, to which the spread of Christian civilization is destined to make a major contribution.⁸⁶

Beginning in the second decade of the 19th century, starting in Britain at the Evangelical fringe, a new eschatology developed,⁸⁷ which expected the return of Christ no longer after the Millennium (postmillennial), but before

of Persons Raised from the Dead, but of the Church Flourishing Gloriously for a Thousand Years after the Conversion of the Jews, and the Flowing-in of All Nations to Them Thus Converted to the Christian Faith" in: *Paraphrase and Commentary on the New Testament* (1703).

⁸² Many of the revival leaders saw this process as already far advanced. For Lyman Beecher "the millennium was just around the corner" and Charles G. Finney, evangelist and holiness theologian, believed that, "if the church would do what is required of her, in America the millennium could come within three years" (William G. McLoughlin, *Modern Revivalism*, New York, 1959, p. 105).

⁸³ Major such movements were the anti-slavery campaign and the temperance movement, but charity for the poor, prison reform and Christian schools equally belonged there.

⁸⁴ "And doubtless one nation shall be enlightened and converted after another, one false religion and false way of worship exploded after another" (Jonathan Edwards, *Works*, New York 1881, I,482).

⁸⁵ "The most barbarous nations shall become as bright and polite as England" (Harvey G. Townsend [ed], *The Philosophy of Jonathan Edwards from His Private Notebooks*, Eugene OR, 1955, p. 207, quoted in: C.C. Goen, "Jonathan Edwards: A New Departure in Eschatology" in: *Church History* XXVII (März 1959), pp. 25-40).

⁸⁶ In postmillennial theology Christian culture is not identified with Western culture, only with the best in it, like the fight against slavery and alcoholism and for better protection of women and labourers.

⁸⁷ Important roles in Britain were played by John Nelson Darby, Dr Tregelles and B.W. Newton (all from the Brethren) and Michael Baxter (Anglican, husband of Elizabeth Baxter), in the USA by Joseph A. Seiss, James H. Brookes, Nathanael West and William Blackstone (Edvard Torjesen, *In the Expectation of Christ's Return. A Study of Premillennialism in the Perspective of Church History and the Writings of Fredrik Franson*, Ewersbach 1983, pp. 7-17).

the Millennium (premillennial), during which Christ would reign as the (visible) King. In Britain the centre of premillennial eschatology was the Brethren Movement⁸⁸ and the Apostolic Movement (Edward Irving 1792-1834),⁸⁹ in America it found its strongest expressions in the Prophetic Conferences.⁹⁰

Several of the Faith Mission founders experienced the change from a postmillennial to a premillennial eschatology as a spiritual breakthrough. More importantly, the new eschatology turned out to be a strong motivating force for foreign missions: A.B. Simpson, Fredrik Franson, Grattan Guinness (and others with them) were convinced that Christ's second coming would not happen out of the blue at any moment, but after fulfilling a number of preconditions, prophetically defined. The final of these preconditions was found in Mt 24:14, namely the evangelization (not the conversion) of all nations.⁹¹ This precondition was still unfulfilled, and many efforts were made to help in "bringing back the King."⁹²

⁸⁸ A good overview is offered by: F. Roy Coad, *Prophetic Developments. With Particular Reference to the Early Brethren Movement*, Pinner/Middlesex, 1966 (Christian Brethren Research Fellowship Occasional Paper No. 2). Another important centre was Mildmay (*The Word, the Work and the World*, 1885, p. 48).

⁸⁹ He made known his views in 1825. In 1827 he published his translation of the South American Jesuit Manuel de Lacunza's "The Coming of the Messiah in Glory and Majesty" (The book was originally written in 1790, put on the index, a secret publication was made in Cadiz 1810 or 1811 "La venida del Mesias en gloria en majestad" [Juan Josafat Ben-Ezra], published in London 1816 and 1826), prefaced by 200 pages of his own, in which he also describes the development of his views (Murray, *The Puritan Hope*, pp. 188-190). For his life see: Jean Christie Root, *Edward Irving. Man, Preacher, Prophet*, Boston, 1912.

⁹⁰ New York 1878, Chicago 1886, Allegheny 1895, Boston 1901, Chicago 1914, Philadelphia and New York 1918 (Timothy P. Weber, *Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming*, Chicago: Chicago University Press, ²1987.)

⁹¹ "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come" (NIV).

⁹² The missiological concept of reaching the unreached peoples of the world is based on the premillennial reading of this and related texts.

Current Evangelical reception of the Faith Mission heritage

Historically

Evangelical piety and related concepts of history lay claim to many a hero of faith over the centuries. From Pietism claims are laid on Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf (of Moravian fame) and to August Hermann Francke of Halle (a leader of Pietism before Zinzendorf) is ascribed the "faith principle."⁹³

From the Great Awakening similar claims are laid on men like William Carey or David Livingstone, Adoniram Judson of Burma or Ludwig Harms who sent his "farmer-missionaries" to South Africa.⁹⁴ At Evangelical Seminaries and Bible Schools the mission history taught was largely that of the Classical Missions, and there was usually very little interest in their own history and mission history.

In terms of literary reception in the German speaking areas, of the Faith Mission pioneers only Hudson Taylor, C.T. Studd and Cameron Townsend, the founder of the Wycliffe Bible Translators, became well known. Fanny and Grattan Guinness, Karl Kumm, A.B. Simpson, Rowland Bingham and others have remained largely unknown.

This tendency to lay claim on the classical and pre-classical fathers seems to indicate to me that Evangelical self confidence has declined.

Theologically

Since around 1910 a general trend in the Faith Missions was to push back the Holiness heritage of the Evangelical Revival (Holiness Revival). It can also be observed that the independent position of women in many Faith

⁹³ August Hermann Francke in Halle no doubt financed his many undertakings through faith, but all direct connections I have come about point to Georg Müller and Anthony Norris Groves, where they are found in a very different ecclesiological context.

⁹⁴ *Heinrich Bammann, *Inkulturation des Evangeliums unter den Batswana in Transvaal/Südafrika. Am Beispiel der Arbeit von Vätern und Söhnen der Hermnnsburger Mission von 1857 – 1940*, Nürnberg: VTR, 2004; Heinrich Bammann, *Koinonia in Afrika. Koinonia bei Bruno Gutmann (Tanzania) und bei den Hermannsburger Missionaren im südlichen Afrika*, Bad Liebenzell: Verlag der Liebenzeller Mission, 1990.

Missions has declined.⁹⁵ This does not apply to WEC International and Overseas Missionary Fellowship, but in other missions like the Unevangelized Fields Mission (WEC's sister mission) nothing of it is left.

Similar was the fate of holiness teaching. While during the second half of the 19th century one could speak of an "Arminianization" of the Evangelical communities, the 20th century was characterized by a "Re-Calvinization" of the Evangelical movement, the Evangelical missions included.

Less obvious is a change in eschatology from an expectation of the *imminent* return of Christ to an "any moment" return. This seems to be a minor change, but it divorces the missionary effort from eschatology and points to a declining importance of eschatology in Evangelical circles.⁹⁶

Missiologically

As far as German speaking Evangelical missiology is concerned, it is obvious that the Fathers are all from the Classical Missions, Gustav Warneck first of all, but let us not forget Karl Hartenstein, Georg Vicedom, Bruno Gutmann, Theodor Christlieb, Karl Graul, Karl Gottlieb Pfander or Johannes Warneck. There is hardly any reference to the founders of the German Faith Missions or to their theology. This means that there is little possibility for study and discussion of the Evangelical heritage. Instead, at least in Germany, the Evangelical missions struggle to profile themselves as the real and appropriate heirs of the Classical Missions and their theology.

This attitude shows itself in the reception and understanding of the line of world mission conferences. Often an ascending line is being drawn from London 1854 via Liverpool 1860, London 1878 and 1888 and New York 1900 to Edinburgh 1910, then changing to a declining line as follows: Jerusalem 1928, Tambaram 1938 and ultimately New Delhi 1961. From the perspective of the Evangelical missions (Independent Missions, Brethren Missions and Faith Missions) this picture, though sometimes promoted in Evangelical circles, cannot be justified. First to note is the fact that the origin of the world mission conferences is pre-Evangelical. The Independent

⁹⁵ *For a more recent discussion of this topic see: Dana Roberts, *American Women in Mission. A Social History of their Thought and Practice*, Macon: Mercer University Press, 1996, pp. 189-254 [216].

⁹⁶ *The collapse of Communism in 1989 also exposed men like Hal Lindsay ("Great Old Planet Earth") as false prophets, as he had predicted Harmageddon for that same decade (Hal Lindsay, *The 1980s: Countdown to Armageddon*, Toronto et al: Bantam Books, 1980.)

Missions and the Brethren never took part. Hudson Taylor took part in the London 1878 conference as the lonely representative of a Faith Mission. The Salvation Army refused the invitation to participate in London 1888. The New York 1900 conference achieved the strongest Evangelical participation. It was prepared by the missions that would later form the Foreign Missions Conference of North America. In this grouping the Classical Missions formed the majority, but a few Evangelical Missions were also members. For the Faith Missions New York 1900 was attractive for another reason: The style of the meetings was similar to what they were used from their evangelistic meetings and other conferences. A symbol was that Ira Sankey, who organized the music for Moody's evangelistic campaigns, was one of the music leaders during the conference.⁹⁷ Another attraction was the name: Ecumenical Missionary Conference. In this context ecumenical did not mean cooperation between all churches, but it meant the whole world as the missionary task, an idea that was basic and dear to the Faith Missions. Therefore much space was allotted to presentations about the missionary work in specific countries or regions. No plans were made to establish a representative body, and when a continuation committee was proposed, the idea was explicitly rejected.⁹⁸

Edinburgh 1910 differed from all previous conferences in that it was organized by the World's Student Christian Federation (WSCF) which had its roots in the Student Volunteer Movement.⁹⁹ The WSCF had, already before the Conference, a worldwide structure, which could serve as a pattern for after Edinburgh 1910 developments.¹⁰⁰ The Faith Missions had an *individual* concept of unity while the Classical Missions by then had largely acquired a *corporate* concept of unity. The Faith Missions were willing to participate in such conferences as individual missions, but as to any demands for corporate unity they had to be reluctant, unless they could lose their independence over against the churches. For the Evangelical Missions to be interdenominational never meant the cooperation of (or with) churches,

⁹⁷ William Richey Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, New York 1952.

⁹⁸ One group, which made a resolution to that extent a day after the conference, did not achieve anything, even though A.T. Pierson supported the idea (*Missionary Review of the World* 1900, p. 472.)

⁹⁹ For the history see: Ruth Rouse, *The World's Student Christian Federation. A History of the First Thirty Years*, London 1948.

¹⁰⁰ For Edinburgh 1910 see: Ruth Rouse, *The World's Student Christian Federation*, pp. 128-132; Delavan L. Pierson, "The Edinburgh Missionary Conference" in: *Missionary Review of the World*, 1910, pp. 647-664.

but the cooperation of individuals. In Edinburgh 1910 several Faith Missions took part, and they made some limited contributions, but many had structural and theological concerns which made them feel ill at ease, and as a group they were not recognized.¹⁰¹

After Edinburgh 1910 the world wide missionary movement was organized in a way that left no room for the Evangelicals, and, with tiny exceptions, they did not participate any more in the world missionary conferences. One might argue that the thread of the Evangelical involvement in world missionary conferences was, after New York 1900, only picked up again. I feel that an Evangelical reception of New York 1900 is required and a study of the conferences that could connect New York 1900 and Lausanne 1974.¹⁰²

A new approach to Evangelical mission history

Over the last years in the English speaking world there has been a renewed interest in the history of the Evangelical missions, which resulted in a number of dissertations,¹⁰³ mostly unpublished, but available through University Microfilm International. Among these historical dissertations I

¹⁰¹ *For a full treatment of the issue see: Klaus Fiedler, "The World Missionary Conference 'Edinburgh 1910' as Seen from Malawi," *Religion and Culture*, no. 1, 2013, pp. 23-33; Klaus Fiedler, "Edinburgh 1910 and the Evangelicals," *Evangelical Theological Review*, 34/4 (Oct 2010). pp. 53-71 and Klaus Fiedler, "Edinburgh 1910, Africa 2010 and the Evangelicals," *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, 2010, xxxvi (3) Oct 2010, pp. 53-71.

¹⁰² Here I think first of all of the World Mission Congress in Berlin, but also the Youth for Christ conference Beatenberg 1948, which influenced Ernst Schrapp very much.

¹⁰³ Some of these dissertations are: John A. Gration, *The Relationship of the Africa Inland Mission and its National Church in Kenya between 1895 and 1971*, PhD New York University 1973, Ann Arbor [UMI] 1974; David P. Sandgren, *The Kikuyu, Christianity and the Africa Inland Mission*, PhD University of Wisconsin-Madison 1976, Ann Arbor [UMI] 1976. Torjesen, Edvard, *A Study of Fredrik Franson. The Development and Impact of his Ecclesiology, Missiology, and Worldwide Evangelism* (PhD International College 1984), Ann Arbor [UMI] 1985 (855 pages); Wendell W. Price, *The Role of Women in the Ministry of the Christian and Missionary Alliance*, DMiss, San Francisco Theol Seminary 1977; George G. Houghton, *The Contribution of Adoniram Judson Gordon to American Christianity*, ThD, Dallas Theological Seminary 1970.

found only one that covers more than one mission.¹⁰⁴ My study of Faith Mission ecclesiology, the first attempt to cover all the Faith Missions in view of one major issue, was published in 1992.¹⁰⁵

For the German speaking area I am aware of three PhD dissertations on the Faith Missions: Bernd Brandl at the Evangelical Theological Faculty in Leuven studied the history of the Neukirchen Mission, the first German Faith Mission,¹⁰⁶ and Andreas Franz wrote his thesis there on Hudson Taylor's influence on the German and Swiss Faith Missions, thus covering eight of the early German speaking Faith Missions.¹⁰⁷ Norbert Schmidt has finished his thesis on the Marburger Brasilienmission.¹⁰⁸ There are also studies of English Speaking Faith Missions being done at the Evangelical Theological Faculty at Leuven.¹⁰⁹ The journey embarked on must continue,

¹⁰⁴ Daniel W. Bacon, *From Faith to Faith. The influence of Hudson Taylor on the Faith Missions Movement* [DMiss, Trinity, Deerfield 1983], Singapore 1984.

¹⁰⁵ *Klaus Fiedler, *Das Kirchenverständnis der Glaubensmissionen und ihrer Kirchen in Afrika – Ein Beitrag zu den Möglichkeiten und Grenzen einer interdenominationellen Ekklesiologie*, Dr theol, Heidelberg University, 1991. Published as: *Ganz auf Vertrauen. Geschichte und Kirchenverständnis der Glaubensmissionen*. Gießen/ Basel: Brunnen, 1992, 605 pp. (Out of print, now available through <http://tinyurl.com/fiedler> as free download.) The English version is: Klaus Fiedler, *The Story of Faith Missions*. Regnum/Lynx: Oxford, 1994; also Albatross Books, Southerland NSW Australia, 1994; Reprinted by Regnum Books Int., 1995, with the subtitle: *From Hudson Taylor to Present Day Africa*).

¹⁰⁶ *Bernd Brandl: *Die Geschichte der Neukirchener Mission als erste deutsche Glaubensmission*, PhD, Evangelical Theological Faculty Leuven, 1997, published as: Bernd Brandl, *Die Neukirchener Mission. Ihre Geschichte als erste deutsche Glaubensmission*. Schriftenreihe des Vereins für Rheinische Kirchengeschichte, Vol. 128. Köln/Neukirchen-Vluyn: Rheinland-Verlag/Neukirchener Verlag, 1998, 517 pp; summary in English, pp. 508-517.

¹⁰⁷ *Andreas Franz, *Hudson Taylor und die deutschsprachigen Glaubensmissionen*, PhD, Evangelical Theological Faculty, Leuven, 1991; Published as: Andreas Franz, *Mission ohne Grenzen. Hudson Taylor und die deutschsprachigen Glaubensmissionen*, Giessen/Basel: Brunnen, 1993, 357 pp; summary in English, pp. 340-357. (Andreas Franz was my first PhD student, whom I took over from Professor George W. Peters.)

¹⁰⁸ *Published as: Norbert Schmidt, *Von der Evangelisation zur Kirchengründung: die Geschichte der Marburger Brasilienmission*, Marburg: Francke, 1991.

¹⁰⁹ *Virgil Reeves, *The Changing World of Interdenominational Faith Missions. A History of the Unevangelized Fields Mission in France and its Predecessors: The Thonon Evangelistic Mission and the Alpine Mission to France*, PhD, Evangelical

so that we can define our Evangelical identity in historical terms. Here I would wish that someone would write a thesis about the life Héli Chatelin, the founder of the Mission Philafricaine in Angola.¹¹⁰

Let's start afresh

With historical studies a new start has been made, and I am convinced that the study of Evangelical history will help us to better define our Evangelical identity. I believe that another step is required: to study the *theology* of our Evangelical fathers (and mothers!) A first step could be the reprinting of some of their fundamental publications, and there could also be a collection of historical source materials. A study of early Evangelical mission *theology* could profit from a serious study of Heinrich Coerper's writings and activities. For more recent times I would propose a study of Ernst Schrupp's theology.¹¹¹ There could also be thematic studies like on the Faith Missions and holiness teaching or on the Faith Missions and eschatology.¹¹² A different line would be the study of the (changing?) relationships between the Evangelical (Faith) Missions and the Classical (Ecumenical) Missions (including their various umbrella bodies) from 1878 to 1945.¹¹³

Theological Faculty Leuven, 2000; Aaldert Prins, *The History of the Belgian Gospel Mission from 1918 to 1962*, PhD, Evangelical Theological Faculty, Leuven, 2015. For a major missiological book, that takes the Faith Missions seriously as a category of its own, see: Dana Roberts, *American Women in Mission. A Social History of their Thought and Practice*, Macon: Mercer University Press, 1996.

¹¹⁰ In Renens near Lausanne there are excellent primary sources for such an endeavour.

¹¹¹ *When my hopes to become a missionary in Cameroon did not work out, the fascinating personality of Ernst Schrupp attracted me to become a Wiedenest missionary in South Tanzania. See a short dictionary entry on his life further down in this book.

¹¹² *A small contribution to this is: Klaus Fiedler, "Shifts in Eschatology - Shifts in Missiology," in: Jochen Eber (ed), *Hope does not Disappoint. Studies in Eschatology. Essays from Different Contexts*, Wheaton: World Evangelical Fellowship – Theological Commission, Bangalore: Theological Book Trust, 2001, reproduced in this book.

¹¹³ *For a line of thought a base could be: Klaus Fiedler, "Edinburgh 1910 and the Evangelicals," *Evangelical Theological Review*, 34/4 (Oct 2010), pp. 53-71.

Final thoughts

I am convinced that the Faith Missions and the missions of the Brethren Movement present us with historical and theological heritage worth to be preserved and to be developed further. To study our own heritage will help us to define our Evangelical identity in a positive way, strengthening it in the process. This will provide another base for the development of an Evangelical theology, which is willing and able to answer today's challenges and make a positive contribution to the missiological discourse which may even be attracted to others who are not exactly from our tradition. To promote and produce such a contribution is a task for the Association of German Speaking Evangelical Missiologists.

13 Aspects of the Early History of the Bible School Movement¹ (1992)

Among Evangelical Christians, especially among those interested in missions, the bible school as an institution is being taken for granted. But though Christian education and all kinds of theological training are nearly as old as Christianity itself (just to think of Origin's' theological school at Alexandria), the bible school as an institution carrying that name is quite recent. In this essay I'll attempt to present a picture of the origins of the bible school movement and try to relate it to some present day issues in Christian education.

In German missiology the statement: "Missions are the fruit of the Revival" is commonly accepted. It indicates that the classical German missions are a result of the revival that spread through Protestant Germany and Switzerland in the early decades of the 19th century.² But the statement is true in a much more general way: Not just that a certain number of missions came from a certain revival, but that almost all missions were born in revival, though - and this must be taken seriously by the historian - in different revivals with different theologies.³ What applies to missions, applies to new Christian institutions in general. Since the bible schools were a new institution, the question may justly be asked which revival movement brought them forth and shaped them. Their distinctives - another question to be asked - may be defined by tracing their differences with earlier institutions of Christian education, but also by the theology of the revival from which they came.

¹ First published as: Klaus Fiedler, "Aspects of the Early History of the Bible School Movement," in: *Festschrift Donald Moreland. The Secret of Faith. In Your Heart - In Your Mouth*. Marthinus W. Pretorius (ed). Heverlee/Leuven: Evangelische Theologische Fakulteit, 1992, pp. 62-77.

² For the historical typology employed here see: Klaus Fiedler, *Ganz auf Vertrauen, Geschichte und Kirchenverständnis der Glaubensmissionen*, Brunnen Verlag Gießen/Basel 1992, 12-35. The English version is Klaus Fiedler, *The Story of Faith Missions. From Hudson Taylor to Present Day Africa*. Oxford: Regnum, ²1995.

³ This revival, for German church historians usually just "The Revival," is closely connected to the Deutsche Christentumsgesellschaft at Basel and gave birth to the classical German missions like Basel, Bremen, Berlin, Rhenish Mission etc.

A view from my childhood Germany

When as a youth I began to be interested in theological education, I perceived a clear hierarchy: The theological faculties of the universities were top, then came the seminaries of the free churches, finally the bible schools. The university demanded most previous education, provided the most scholarly training and offered the highest monetary rewards.

On the other hand there seemed to be an inversed hierarchy: At the universities there was the least spiritual life (a personal Christian commitment was not even required), the free church seminaries demanded more (proof of conversion and calling; experience in church work), but the most pious were the bible schools.

I also learned that the bible schools (and to a lesser extent the seminaries) criticized the universities for their theological liberalism (and I myself, though being qualified for university, chose the Baptist seminary not to unduly expose myself to modern theology). But I also observed that the seminaries and even the bible schools accepted the hierarchy of theological education: The teachers at seminaries and sometimes even at bible schools were mostly university trained. The situation was clear: bible schools and seminaries offered a pious low level education.

The perception of my youth days was limited, it may have been at fault somewhat, but the issue remains: Are the bible schools just a low level theological training offering a limited qualification or are they an alternative way of theological training? I'll look into the origins of the bible school movement and try to give an answer from that perspective.

Institutions preceding the bible schools

A.B. Simpson, founder of the Christian and Missionary Alliance and of the first American bible school called St. Chrischona the first bible school.⁴ It was started in 1840 by Christian Friedrich Spittler. The first student was a carpenter from Ravensburg, Joseph Mohr, who had left the Basel Mission Seminary because he had realized, "that his gifts lay elsewhere than in learning foreign languages."⁵ Another school which is sometimes seen as an early bible school, is Spurgeon's pastors' college, which he founded as a private initiative in 1857 and which in 1861 became the responsibility of his

⁴ *The Word, the Work and the World*, 1888,76.

⁵ Erich Schick; Klaus Haag, *Christian Friedrich Spittler. Handlanger Gottes*, Gießen/Basel, 1982, 49.

Tabernacle congregation. But its aim was to train pastors,⁶ and there were no women students.⁷

In America, too, some predecessor schools may be found: Rev. S.H. Tyng's "Home of the Evangelists" for training city evangelists, or Rev. DeWitt Talmadge's "Tabernacle Lay College" (1872) or "Bethany Institute" for women in Brooklyn. But they did not last long. These institutions, useful as they were, did not start a new movement of Christian education. If these were predecessors, A.B. Simpson opened the first American bible school.⁸

East London Training Institute: The first "bible school"

The first missionary training institute or, to employ the later name, the first bible school, then was the East London Training Institute, which Fanny and Grattan Guinness opened in 1873 to "multiply earnest and efficient missionaries at home and abroad."⁹ That was to be done by lessons, but also on the job: "Mission work among the lapsed masses of the people; preaching in the open air, and in Mission halls and Rooms; Teaching in Schools; house to house visiting etc."¹⁰ Primary emphasis was neither academic nor practical learning, but spiritual development. How effective could an evangelist be if spiritually cold? How long the course was to last

⁶ The first seven students all became pastors, though they seem to have felt a special responsibility: Spurgeon said of them that there would not be any other seven pastors in the Baptist Union who had led so many souls to Christ.

⁷ There were relations between the two schools. Spurgeon brought his students to Harley for an athletics competition (Harry Guinness was an enthusiastic sportsman, winning even the world record for slow bicycling in the Crystal Palace on June 10th, 1881) and the Harley students were invited to a pre Christmas dinner. Michelle Guinness reports from Lucy Guinness' diary: "Mr Spurgeon had stipulated that Mama should be the only female member of the Harley party, but Mama, who was not daunted by anyone, even the most famous preacher in England, took five female friends with her including her two daughters. Never in her life, Lucy claimed, had she heard such a deafening noise as the sound of all those young men eating and talking!" (Michelle Guinness, *The Guinness Legend*, London et al, 1990, p. 140).

⁸ This is also the view of Sydney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, New Haven/London ⁹1979 (1972), p. 812.

⁹ Fanny Guinness, *Hulme Cliff College, Curbar, or, the Story of the Third Year of the East End Training Institute*, London, nd.

¹⁰ For a good description of such evangelism read: M. Wargenau-Saillens, *Ruben et Jeanne Saillens. Evangélistes*, Paris 1947, p. 59.

depended on the needs of the mission field, as much as the amount of non-theological learning depended on actual needs. The school was financed by faith¹¹ and was therefore independent. Since it was interdenominational, it was independent of the churches, too. ELTI attracted many students, quite some of them came from the 1873 revival sparked off in Britain by the famous evangelist Dwight L. Moody.¹² Soon the institute was enlarged.

The East London Training Institute has a double root: In 1865/66, when Grattan Guinness, one of the leading evangelists of the 1858/59 revival, after his marriage to Fanny Fitzgerald and his subsequent embracement of Brethren theology (and especially Brethren premillennial eschatology) Grattan Guinness felt somewhat at a loss and wondered if, instead of being an evangelist, he should concentrate on training Christian workers,¹³ he organized a course in which he taught "Christian evidences" to eight or nine young men four evenings a week, making Paley's *Evidences of Christianity* his textbook.¹⁴ So the attempt to defend the Christian truth was one root of the bible school movement. Grattan Guinness did not conceive the course a full success, but one action did change the course of his and Fanny's life: He invited Hudson Taylor to speak to his students. Hudson Taylor did that on Monday, February 19th, 1866. Four of the students applied to join the first party of CIM missionaries. When Fanny and Grattan Guinness applied, too, Hudson Taylor gently but firmly refused, on the erroneous ground that, being past thirty, language study would be too difficult for them. Instead he suggested that the Guinness's "train him the men."¹⁵ That would have transformed the nascent institute of training for the defence of the Christian truth into a missionary training institute. But Grattan Guinness did

¹¹ That was comparatively easy for Grattan Guinness, but Fanny had to make ends meet, later their daughter Geraldine.

¹² Rufus W. Clark, *The Work of God in Great Britain: Under Messrs. Moody and Sankey, 1873 to 1875*, New York 1875; John Hall and George H. Stuart, *The American Evangelists D.L. Moody and Ira Sankey in Great Britain and Ireland*, New York 1875.

¹³ Michelle Guinness, *The Guinness Legend*, London/Sydney/Auckland/Toronto: Hodder and Stoughton, 1990, pp. 75-84.

¹⁴ Ibid. Michelle Guinness, *The Guinness Legend*, p. 84. In 1859 Darwin's *Origin of Species* was published and shook Christian circles considerably. — *William Paley, *A View of the Evidences of Christianity*, 1794.

¹⁵ A.J. Broomhall, *Survivors' Pact* 118-120. Elizabeth Pritchard, *For Such a Time as This. God's Faithfulness through the Regions Beyond Missionary Union for a Hundred Years*, Lottbridge Drove, 1971.

not open the requested institute, and the Guinness's went to Paris instead as missionaries. Only in 1873 they did what Hudson Taylor had requested them to do and opened the East London Training Institute.

The institute showed typical characteristics of the bible schools: It was interdenominational, everyone could gain admission, irrespective of social class or previous education, it was financed by faith, it was independent of any church or mission. One distinctive, though, was still lacking: Training was for men only, as was the case in the classical mission seminaries. This default Fanny Guinness remedied by opening Doric Lodge as the female wing of the ELTI in 1884.¹⁶ She gave the reason, too:

"We are increasingly convinced of the importance of well-trained female agents among the heathen, and of the fact that multitudes of women who have the natural and spiritual qualifications...are wasting their time at home here in England."¹⁷

Today the East London Training Institute is largely forgotten, because it was closed in 1910. In 1898 Fanny Guinness had died, Grattan Guinness retired in order to devote his time mainly to prophetic studies.¹⁸ Harry and Annie Guinness took over the leadership. Around 1900 the number of students began to decline. Harry Guinness tried hard after 1910 to reopen the institute, but the outbreak of World War I made it even less likely. Harry Guinness died in 1915, but the mission related to the institute, Regions Beyond Missionary Union, exists still today.

Other British bible schools/missionary training institutes

There are three bible schools in Britain which were founded in the 19th century and still exist today: Faith Mission Bible College, Edinburgh (1886), Bible Training Institute, Glasgow (1892) and Redcliffe Missionary Training College (1892). All three schools were closely related to missions: The Faith Mission, founded by John George Govan to reach the unreached villages of heathenish Scotland,¹⁹ was patterned after the China Inland Mission. The

¹⁶ Harry Guinness, *Not Unto Us. Record of Twenty One Years' Missionary Service*, London nd., p. 12.

¹⁷ *The Regions Beyond* 1885, p. 110.

¹⁸ His studies and publications were honoured by Brown University, USA, with a doctorate of divinity.

¹⁹ In 1886 Govan wrote: "'If Saline, Mukhearth, Killian, etc., are types of the little villages of Scotland, they are in a heathenish state" (in: I.R. Govan, *Spirit of Revival. The Story of J.G. Govan and the Faith Mission*, Edinburgh 1978[1938], p. 36).

first principal of the Glasgow BTI was John Anderson, the founder of the Southern Morocco Mission, and Redcliffe was founded by Mrs Tottenham, who was in charge of the YWCA's evangelistic department in the South of England.²⁰

Of the still existing bible schools, the next two were founded in the 1920s: Emmanuel Bible College, Birkenhead (1920)²¹ and Bible College of Wales, Swansea (1924).²² Both schools were part of the Holiness Movement, and therefore many of its trainees joined the Worldwide Evangelization Crusade, today known as WEC International.²³

The ELTI tradition was taken up after the war by All Nations Bible College founded in 1923 under the leadership of the holiness preacher F.B. Meyer, who was a leading member of the Regions Beyond Missionary Union and had been a teacher at ELTI. But there was one difference: The new college trained men only. Colleges claiming the ELTI tradition and training women only were Mount Hermon Missionary Training College in Bethnal Green (founded 1911 by Miss Whitfield) and Ridgeland's Bible College in Bexley (founded by Mrs and Mr Hooker in 1919). Together with All Nations Bible College (1962 renamed All Nations Missionary College) they formed the All Nations Christian College in 1971.²⁴

²⁰ Victor Reid (ed), *Redcliffe College 1892 - 1992*. Redcliffe was founded as a "YWCA Testing and Training Home " at 495 Kings Road, Chelsea.

²¹ Founded by J.D. Drysdale. His biography is: Norman P. Grubb, *J.D. Drysdale, Prophet of Holiness*, London 1955, 1-184. Priscilla Studd sent her students there because she sensed an akin spirit there (p. 10).

²² Founded by Rees Howells (Norman P. Grubb, *Rees Howells. Intercessor*, Guildford/London ⁸1983 (1952), who came from the 1904 revival in Wales. Through Alfred Buxton (then Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society) the school established close connections to the Ethiopian Imperial House (Doris M. Ruscoe, *The Intercession of Rees Howells*, Guildford/Ft. Washington 1983, p. 22f).

²³ Another school which trained many missionaries (altogether about 3000) was the Missionary Training Colony in South London founded in 1921 by Godfrey Buxton, which existed until 1939. Alfred Buxton was in 1913, together with C.T Studd, co-founder of WEC.

²⁴ The Story of Easneye 13-23 (courtesy of R.G. Hunt, 6.12.1992).

Origin of the Bible School Movement: Holiness Missionary Training

In order to be able to define the role of the bible schools today in theological training, it is good to know their origins. These can be summarized under six headings:

(a) The bible school movement goes back to the great Evangelical Revival in the 19th century (with its two waves of 1858/59 and 1873).

(b) The spirituality of the early bible school movement was strongly influenced by the Holiness Movement.²⁵ Part of this spirituality were the search for holiness as "power for service" and (at least in the early decades) the training of women and men together for evangelism.²⁶

(c) The basic aim of the early bible schools was the speedy evangelization of the world. To achieve this, they were to use the "neglected forces of Christianity" (A.B. Simpson). This they did by training women and by training men whose education did not match the entry requirements for seminary or university.

(d) The early bible schools basically did not distinguish between heathen abroad or at home. Many bible school students joined evangelistic movements (fellowship movements/missions) at home. Many of these movements later became denominations which drew for their pastors on the men trained at bible schools.

(e) The early bible schools were primarily missionary training schools. They had no intention to compete with the seminaries or the universities for the training of pastors.

(f) The early bible schools were not founded as a reaction against the "liberal" theology of universities or seminaries. Nevertheless they developed their own spirituality (based in the revival with its emphasis on holiness, laity and biblical prophecy) and, based on their spirituality, their

²⁵ Due to the development of a number of holiness denominations in America and due to the role which the holiness movement played in the birth of the Pentecostal movement, many evangelical leaders today do not like the term. I use the term in its original broad meaning (Klaus Fiedler, *Ganz auf Vertrauen*, p. 210ff). The leading holiness institution in Britain were the Keswick Conferences.

²⁶ Today often formulations are being used such as: The women "did work that men should have done" (*The Story of Easneye* p. 17). That was not the idea then: Women were not trained to fill in gaps left by men, but to fulfill their divine calling in the evangelization of the world.

own theology. To define the present day role of the bible school movement it may be worthwhile to do more research into the spiritual origins of the bible school movement.

As the primary research used for this essay was done with the aim of establishing the early history of the faith mission movement, some early schools which no longer exist today may have been overlooked,²⁷ but I claim that the typical pattern of the early bible school movement has been described.

The bible school movement in America

If ELTI was the mother of the whole bible school movement, the mother of the American bible school movement is the New York Missionary Training College, founded in 1893²⁸ by Albert Benjamin Simpson.²⁹

Two other early American bible schools were Moody Bible Institute in Chicago (1889), whose foundation is usually (though wrongly) credited to Moody, and Boston Missionary Training Institute (1889), founded by Adoniram Judson Gordon.³⁰ All three institutes have in common that they were founded in close connection with Grattan Guinness and ELTI. American researchers who studied the bible schools are aware of these connections, but are quite vague about it.³¹

²⁷ One smaller school not mentioned yet was Elizabeth Baxter's Missionary Training School. Mrs Baxter was one of the leaders of the Healing Movement and of the Holiness Movement in Britain. She also founded the Kurku and Central India Hill Mission and the Beth Shan Healing Home. There may well have been other schools like that.

²⁸ Since Simpson started the training of missionaries in a less formal way within his Gospel Tabernacle already a year before, 1892 can also be given as founding year.

²⁹ To see Simpson and the New York Missionary Training College in context, read: Robert Niklaus, John S. Sawin, Samuel J. Stoesz, *All For Jesus. God at Work in the Christian and Missionary Alliance Over One Hundred Years*, Camp Hill, 1986. The book is an excellent combination of scholarly research (Sawin/Stoesz) and journalistic ability (Niklaus).

³⁰ Now part of Gordon Conwell University.

³¹ For example: Virginia Brereton, *Protestant Fundamentalist Bible Schools, 1882 - 1940*, Columbia University, Ann Arbor UMI 1984. Microfiche available from Tübingen University through the external loan service; Gene E. Getz, *Moody Bible Institute. The Story of Moody Bible Institute*, Chicago 1969. Getz writes (p. 28): "It is interesting to note that Moody Bible Institute, prior to Moody's death, was called the Bible Institute for Home and Foreign Missions of the Chicago Evangelization

A.B. Simpson and Grattan Guinness were akin in spirituality and kept in close touch. Both once felt a call to become missionaries to China. Both felt as evangelists responsible to reach the unchurched masses of the great cities, both tried to further missionary work by publishing well edited independent missionary journals (with many excellent illustrations),³² both had a congregational concept of the church³³ and both came from the 1858/59 revival.³⁴ In his magazine A.B. Simpson published in 1882 the suggestion that a training school according to the pattern of the East London Training Institute be opened in America.³⁵ Next year he did exactly that himself.³⁶ Six years later he formulated his intentions thus: "Institutions less technical and elaborate than the ordinary theological seminary, and designed to afford the same specific preparation for direct missionary work, and to meet the wants of that large class, both men and women, who do not wish formal ministerial preparation, but an immediate equipment for usefulness as lay workers."³⁷ Fanny and Grattan Guinness would have agreed wholeheartedly to this.

Boston Missionary Training Institute goes directly back to Grattan Guinness' suggestion. A.J. Gordon was pastor of Clarendon Baptist Church

Society. Though this researcher could find no specific evidence, it may well be that D.L. Moody was influenced by the East London Institute for Home and Foreign Missions in attaching the same descriptive title to his own school." - Most probably Moody did not attach the title to the school, but Emma Dryer who organized it and invited Grattan Guinness in 1889 to advise her.

³² Simpson edited from 1880 - 1881 *The Gospel in All Lands*, later *The Word, the Work and the World*. Fanny and Grattan Guinness edited *The Illustrated Missionary News*, later *The Regions Beyond*.

³³ Grattan Guinness first belonged to the Christian Brethren, later the Guinness family belonged to independent congregations of the tabernacle type, modern churches designed to reach the urban masses. Simpson founded in 1882 the New York Gospel Tabernacle with the same purpose.

³⁴ The young Grattan Guinness was one of its leading evangelists, A.B. Simpson experienced his conversion in 1858 under the influence of Grattan Guinness who was then preaching in Canada.

³⁵ H.S., "Lay Missionary Colleges" in: *The Work, and the World*, March 1882, p. 41.

³⁶ Virginia Brereton is not wrong in giving 1892 as the year of the founding of NYMTI as Simpson started training missionaries on a limited scale within his congregation in that year.

³⁷ N.N. [A.B. Simpson], "Missionary Training Colleges" in: *Christian Alliance* 1 (May 1888), p. 76.

in Boston and at the same time president of the American Baptist Missionary Union (ABMU). In 1884 he had arranged with Fanny Guinness the transfer of the Livingstone Inland Mission, the second faith mission after the China Inland Mission and the first faith mission in Africa, to the ABMU. Fanny Guinness had felt that this transfer would speed up the advance into the interior of what is now Congo. She also hoped that black Americans might be recruited for this advance.³⁸ On both counts her hopes were not fulfilled. In 1889 Grattan Guinness took medical advice for a change of climate to make an extended trip to the United States.³⁹ His first aim was Boston, where he visited Gordon to find out why the advance of the ABMU into the interior of the Congo Basin had halted. Gordon gave lack of recruits as the reason, and Grattan Guinness suggested that Gordon remedy that lack by opening his own missionary training institute. Gordon immediately did that by opening the institute within his congregation.⁴⁰

Moody Bible Institute (MBI) was founded by Emma Dryer as the Bible Institute for Home and Foreign Missions of the Chicago Evangelization Society. MBI is not sure of its foundation date. For quite some time (1894 - 1905) 1889 was celebrated. That was the year when Moody finally bought the plot in Northern Chicago where it still stands today and Emma Dryer invited Grattan Guinness to help her with the organization of the institute on a permanent basis. Since 1906 MBI celebrates 1886 as the year of its birth, a date which makes little sense to me since it is only qualified by the fact that Moody, after years of neglect, took some interest (soon to wane again) in Emma Dryer's work.⁴¹ If the birth of MBI should be dated early, 1883 would be appropriate, because Emma Dryer, who headed the "Bible Work" which had resulted from Moody's evangelizations in Chicago,

³⁸ *The Christian Alliance* 1888, p. 112.

³⁹ Cf. Rev H. Grattan Guinness in: *Faithful Witness* (edited by Rowland V. Bingham), frontispiece with portrait.

⁴⁰ This school was among the early American "bible schools" the speediest in moving up the educational ladder. It became Gordon College and Divinity School, later Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary. As a tribute to its missionary origins it published the unparalleled: Burton L. Goddard (ed), *The Encyclopedia of Modern Christian Missions. The Agencies*, Camden NJ et al. 1967.

⁴¹ The process is well described in: John Pollock, *Moody without Sankey*, London et al. 1983(1963), pp-226-234 "Slow Birth of the Bible Institute."

organized the first "May Institute," a month long annual course for Christian workers.⁴²

Once the Institute was established on a permanent base, there was no room for Emma Dryer in it any more. Moody made Ruben Archer Torey the first principal.⁴³ In May 1893 Moody asked John Mott to head MBI, but Mott refused.⁴⁴

The idea of the Bible Institute spread through all of America.⁴⁵ Just to mention a few names well known today: The Bible Institute of Los Angeles (now BIOLA University) was opened in 1908 on the MBI pattern.⁴⁶ In 1915 W.C. Stevens, collaborator of A.B. Simpson and teacher at the New York Missionary Training Institute,⁴⁷ started Midlands Bible Institute (Kansas City),⁴⁸ where L.E. Maxwell was trained, who started Prairie Bible Institute in Three Hills, today the most important Canadian bible school.⁴⁹ In 1899 Holiness Quakers founded the Training School for Christian Workers in Los Angeles (now Azusa College), and in 1910 Trinity Seminary and Bible Institute was started. Before 1895 the Philadelphia Bible Institute was founded, whose Missionary Council became the home base for the nascent Africa Inland Mission.⁵⁰

⁴² A good source for all this is: Emma Dryer - Blanchard [1923] in the Moody Bible Institute archive.

⁴³ His biography: Roger Martin, *R.A. Torey, Apostle of Certainty*, Murfreesboro 1976. From 1902 onwards Torey became the most important evangelist of that decade, especially in Australia.

⁴⁴ Charles Howard Hopkins, *John R. Mott. A Biography*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979, pp. 104, 107. See also: Charles Howard Hopkins, "John R. Mott, 1865-1955" in Gerald Anderson et al (eds), *Mission Legacies: Biographical Studies of Leaders of the Modern Missionary Movement*, Maryknoll: Orbis, 1994, pp. 79-84.

⁴⁵ For an (incomplete) list of 41 schools founded before 1940 see: Virginia Brereton, *Protestant Fundamentalist Bible Schools, 1882 - 1940*, Columbia University (Ann Arbor UMI 1984), pp. 161ff.

⁴⁶ See: Michael Cocoris, *70 Years on Hope Street. A History of the Church of the Open Door 1915-1985*, Los Angeles Glendora 1985.

⁴⁷ Ted S. Rendall - Fiedler 22.9.1988.

⁴⁸ The institute closed in 1923.

⁴⁹ L.E. Maxwell, *Prairie Pillars*, Three Hills 1971.

⁵⁰ Technically the Philadelphia Missionary Council (PMC) was not part of the AIM, but when the AIM had its first great crisis, partly due to the death of Peter Cameron Scott, its founder, the PMC saved the mission. In 1897 C.E. Hurlbert,

The Bible School as an American institution

Basically, American Bible Schools did not differ from their British counterparts. In their early period Bible Schools in both countries were not called bible schools but missionary training institutes or the like. In both countries these schools were not to compete with the established seminaries,⁵¹ in both countries they were not founded to provide an alternative to "liberal" theology.⁵² And in both countries they were originally an urban phenomenon.⁵³

What did America contribute to the ongoing history of the bible school movement? Possibly the name: Bible school. I have not found any hard and fast evidence why finally the training institutes came to be called bible schools. I have two suggestions to make, which may not be exclusive. First: The bible schools were quite innovative in educational matters, and they were the first to offer a full theological training in comparatively short a time by dispensing with the learning of Hebrew and Greek and just using the English Bible, and the whole of it. This could be supported by the observation that Emma Dryer named her institute Bible Institute for Home and Foreign Missions, not Training Institute. This fact offers the second clue: Her institute had grown out of the "Bible Work" (similarly to today's discipleship training), so she could well call it a Bible Institute for that reason, the more so as her bible courses since 1883 were called May Institutes. This is up to now only conjecture. I would be glad for any clarification one way or the other.

teacher at the bible school, became director of the AIM, and in 1901 he became an AIM missionary, too, until he retired in 1927.

⁵¹ Moody wanted Emma Dryer first to train women only ("Let the theological seminaries take 'em [the men]. We'd find ourselves in hot water quick, if we undertook to educate young men (Emma Dryer - Blanchard [1923], p. 8), maybe deaconesses of the Mildmay type. But men wanted to be trained, too. So Moody finally consented to train "gap-men," who would fill the gap between the pastors and the laity.

⁵² Cf.: "The intention is not to interfere with our theological seminaries, but to supplement and complement their work by short practical courses of study, mainly confined to the English Bible, practical theology, and Christian work by direct contact with souls" (J.M. Sherwood, "Mr. Moody's Training School" in: *Missionary Review of the World*, 1889, p. 945f).

⁵³ V. Brereton stresses this for America (p. 15), but she could claim the same for Britain. Early in this century, with Evangelical wealth increasing, the schools tended to move away from the unchurched masses to quieter grounds in the countryside.

Virginia Brereton in her thesis stresses several times that the early bible schools were more or less just vocational training schools as there had been quite some before them.⁵⁴ Then she observes that in the 1920s the earlier training schools did not survive, but the missionary training schools survived indeed and became, as bible schools, the mainstay of the fundamentalist movement. Her explanation for this obvious fact does not satisfy me,⁵⁵ so I offer another one: In my perception the Evangelical movement (called fundamentalism in the America of the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s) did not start in those decades as a breakaway movement from general Evangelical theology and churchmanship, but had its origins in the 1858/1873 revival movement. The bible schools, even while still called missionary training institutes, had right from the beginning a spirituality and theology of their own, not so much opposed to classical theology, but quite distinct from it. The basic principles of this spirituality and theology were conversion, evangelism, and trust in the bible as God's word to mankind. I argue that the older training schools did not survive the 1920s and 1930s, because they were the weaker elements in a movement (the main line churches, today often called "old-line" churches) that was starting on a steep decline, whereas the bible schools, though they were also a kind of training schools, really came into their own in those decades, since they were, right from their beginnings, part of a new spiritual movement, which in those decades experienced a further surge upwards.

When the Evangelical movement, due to theological and organizational changes in the classical denominations, was forced to clarify its own identity, the bible schools as a set of quite effective institutions became the center of the movement, since there were hardly any Evangelical denominations yet and therefore hardly any Evangelical seminaries.

Bible school identity

The success of the bible schools became their major problem. From the 1930s onwards they could hardly any longer be content with just training "gap-men," even if they trained gap-women, too. They had to answer the

⁵⁴ Virginia Brereton, *Protestant Fundamentalist Bible Schools, 1882 - 1940*, Columbia University (Ann Arbor UMI) 1984, p. 160.

⁵⁵ She claims that only in the 1920s observers began to perceive bible schools as a distinct movement due to the emergence of fundamentalism itself in the twenties. In the scramble to choose sides, it became important for fundamentalists and non-fundamentalists alike to pick out those institutions which they could identify with the new conservative movement, and bible schools stood out (*Ibid.*, p. 167).

question if they would be willing to provide increased (or even full size) theological education. Indeed, more or less all bible schools upgraded their educational levels, some even reaching university standards.

It can be argued that the bible school movement has outgrown its origins. Low level missionary training for people who had no chance to receive secondary school training is no longer needed. In a world grown more complex, missionaries need more training (and are more expensive). One consequence would have been to let these schools disappear as most classical training schools did or to transform them into theological schools of the "highest" academic level. That, too, would make them disappear, not physically, but as a distinct entity.

Personally I would suggest a different way to react: (1) For me the most important peculiarity of the bible school movement was not the fact that missionaries were trained, but the applied theology of the bible schools. They did have a distinct theology of their own, centered on the bible, which the student could approach directly, aiming to further spiritual life and stressing the need for conversion, evangelism and missions. If the Evangelical movement would lose this theology, that would be a heavy loss indeed. This could come about if the hierarchy of theological education described in my childhood view would be allowed to continue.⁵⁶ (2) On the other hand ever upgrading the bible schools will deprive those with little formal education of access to Christian service, be it at home or abroad. Therefore I feel that it is necessary for the Evangelical movement to produce a full set of theological institutions from "one month once a lifetime" courses to scholarly training at university level, taking the concept seriously that God calls people with different educational backgrounds to serve him and mankind. If that concept is accepted, the bible school movement would not do well to limit itself to one level of education. I think that new efforts must be made to establish Evangelical education at the higher and at the lower educational levels, and in this process the Evangelical distinctives in piety and theology must and can be kept, one of them being the fact that bible schools (or whatever name they have had or may chose to have) are interdenominational and thus independent of any church and its structures and limitations.

⁵⁶ Virginia Brereton's observation, that the bible schools were at the very center of the fundamentalist movement, but that generally the élite leaders in the movement did not come from the bible schools but had attended four-year liberal art colleges or even seminaries (p. 77), supports my impression.

14 Shifts in Eschatology - Shifts in Missiology¹ (2001)

Missions and Eschatology

The missionary movement originating in the "Great Awakening," which changed the religious face of the globe, was the most important—and maybe the most neglected—event in modern church history.² The beginnings of this movement coincided with a change in Protestant eschatology, and the beginning of the modern Evangelical Movement was marked by yet another change in eschatology. What, then, is the relationship between eschatology and missions?

As a mission historian I follow Kenneth Scott Latourette's concept that God pushes forward church history by ever new revivals which bring forth ever new organizations—and denominations (Kenneth Scott Latourette).³ Following this approach I have less problems than others with Christian pluralism, be it organizational or denominational. One of the first things I learnt about missions in Germany even before studying theology was that "missions were children of the Revival." After having studied theology, I would like to revise this sentence slightly, "Missions are the children of **revivals**," because it was not only one revival which brought forth missions, but almost every major revival did and does.

This revival base of missions explains why today there is not one solid, sturdy and seasoned Protestant Missionary Movement, but that there are different Protestant missionary movements, almost as many as there were revivals.

¹ Published as: Klaus Fiedler, "Shifts in Eschatology - Shifts in Missiology," in: Jochen Eber (ed), *Hope does not Disappoint. Studies in Eschatology. Essays from Different Contexts*, Wheaton: World Evangelical Fellowship – Theological Commission, Bangalore: Theological Book Trust, 2001. See also: "Shifts in Eschatology – Shifts in Missiology," in: Jochen Eber (ed): *Hope does not Disappoint*. Mission reports vol. 9. Bonn: VKW / India 2001. (ISBN 3-932829-31-X and ISBN 81-7475-036-3). Also on: WEF TC Theological Resources CD ROM; <http://www.world-evangelical.org/cdresourcelib.html>.

² Andrew F. Walls, "Missionary Societies and the Fortunate Subversion of the Church," *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 88:2 [1988], pp. 141-155.

³ This concept is the guiding principle of my book: *Missions as the Theology of the Church. An Argument from Malawi*, Mzuzu: Mzuni Press, 2015.

A revival, though intending nothing but to regain original Christianity in lifestyle and teaching, always brings a new theology (or maybe is caused by a new theology?) Therefore I want to inquire if the present day pluralism of missions, with the revivals that caused it, is in any way related to eschatology.

In this chapter I argue

- (1) that eschatology was and is one of the driving forces of the modern missionary movement and therefore that eschatology was quite instrumental in making Christianity a majority Southern religion.
- (2) that changes in eschatology, running parallel with major changes in the missionary movement, must have either caused them or have been caused by them (or maybe the interaction was even more complicated).
- (3) that "realistic" (but not "ultrarealistic") types of eschatology are better suited for the expansion of the church than "spiritual" types.
- (4) that developments in eschatological doctrine seem to be closely related to the societal mood in the perception of things (*zeitgeist*).⁴

In current missiological discussion normally two different (and at times opposing) Protestant missionary movements are being distinguished: Ecumenical and Evangelical. I want to use this distinction for my analysis, too, since the two movements were born with quite different eschatologies. But in order to be precise I want to use a more detailed typology of missions. This typology is based on the historic origins of the various missions and therefore based on the revivals they originated from.⁵

Revival	Date	Missions	Eschatology
Reformation	1517	Only Catholic missions ⁶	Amillennial
Puritanism/Pietism	1575/1675	Some missions, especially the Moravians	Postmillennial

⁴ I use this term, originally German, in the way David Barrett uses it in, *Schism and Renewal in Africa. An Analysis of Six Thousand Contemporary Religious Movements*, Oxford University Press, 1968.

⁵ For more details see: Klaus Fiedler, *The Story of the Faith Missions*, Oxford: Regnum, Sutherland: Albatross, 1994, pp. 13-28.

⁶ See the Wittenberg theological advice of 1652 (*Consilia theologica Witebergensia, Das ist Wittenbergische Geistliche Rathschläge deß theuren Mannes Gottes D. Martini Lutheri, seiner Collegen and treuen Nachfolger*, Frankfurt 1664, reproduced in Werner Raupp, *Mission in Quellentexten. Von der Reformation bis zur Weltmissionskonferenz 1910*, Erlangen/Bad Liebenzell: Verlag der Evang.-Luth. Mission/Verlag der Liebenzeller Mission, 1990, p. 70f.)

Great Awakening	1734/1792	The Classical Missions (The Great Missionary Century)	Postmillennial
Restorationist Revival	After 1800, 1830s	Missions of the Churches of Christ, Christian Brethren, New Apostolic Church, Seventh-day Adventist Church	Premillennial ⁷
Holiness Revival (Second Evangelical Revival)	1858/59	Interdenominational Faith Missions	Premillennial
Pentecostal Revival	1806	Denominational Pentecostal Missions	Premillennial
Charismatic Revival	1960	Nascent Charismatic Missions	Premillennial ⁸

In this table and in this chapter I use a somewhat narrow definition of the term "Evangelical." In a wider definition "Evangelical" includes the historical movements of Pietism/Puritanism and the Great Awakening.⁹ This inclusive definition is quite appropriate for the study of history, but since Pietism/Puritanism and (mainly) the Great Awakening gave birth to what are now the ecumenical ("classical") missions, which differ considerably from the missions born by the later Evangelical movements (from 1828 onwards), for the study of missiology it is better to employ a more restricted definition of "Evangelical." This also takes account of the different eschatological concepts.

Very often the year 1865, when Hudson and Maria Taylor founded the China Inland Mission and thereby started the missionary movement of the interdenominational faith missions, is taken to be the beginning of the Evangelical missionary movement, but in fact it started in 1828, when Anthony Norris Groves and his party of Christian Brethren left England for missionary work in Baghdad.¹⁰

⁷ The Churches of Christ started before the premillennial turn and probably less than a quarter joined the Evangelical turn to premillennialism.

⁸ There seems to be a somewhat declining emphasis on premillennial eschatology.

⁹ David Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain. A History from the 1730s to the 1980s*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992.

¹⁰ Anthony Norris Groves, *Journal of Mr. Anthony N. Groves, Missionary, during a Journey from London to Baghdad through Russia, Georgia, and Persia. Also, a Journal of some Months Residence at Bagdad*, London 1831. *For a detailed monograph see: Robert Bernard Dann, *Father of Faith Missions. The Life and Times of Anthony Norris Groves (1795-1853)*, Waynesboro/Bletchley: Authentic Media, 2004.

The Christian Brethren are today and have ever been a comparatively small denominational family, but their influence, both in ideas and theology, has been much larger than their numbers. The Brethren supplied some of the innovative key concepts for the interdenominational faith missions, developed a radical ecclesiology (with no room for ordination), and provided a major impetus to the changes in eschatology discussed in this chapter.¹¹

Amillennialism and the lack of missionary vision

The Protestant Reformation was a typical revival, bringing a new theology under the guise of restoring the original, causing spiritual fervour everywhere (sometimes too much for the Reformers' liking!), causing the church to split and new denominations to be established.

The Reformers' eschatology was "spiritual." They did expect a future for the believer in the eternal kingdom of Christ, but they did not expect an earthly kingdom of a thousand years ("millennium"). This idea ("chiliasm") was left to that wing of the Reformation which the main stream Reformers disparagingly called the "Enthusiasts" (Schwärmer). In their amillennialism the Reformers basically followed the lead of the Catholic Church as expressed in the theology of St. Augustine, for example.¹²

The Reformers had a very limited missionary vision. Yes, when a Christian would get into Muslim captivity, he or she would have to be a witness for Christ, and a Christian ruler with heathen subjects should cause the Gospel to be preached among them, and that's how later the king of Denmark argued and established the Tranquebar Mission in India (with Pietists as missionaries). In addition emigrants should be provided with pastors (and in 1557/8 Calvin indeed sent three to Brazil). But against the Muslim threat Luther preferred the arms of the united Catholic and Protestant armies of the German Empire, since the Muslims had no chance for conversion. Even the Jews, who were no military threat, Luther saw more as enemies of the Gospel and "as easy to convert as the devil," than

¹¹ Frederick Roy Coad, *A History of the Brethren Movement. Its Origins, its World-wide Development and its Significance for the Present Day*, Exeter 1968.

¹² For an overview of "Millenarianism in the History of the Church" see Stanley J. Grenz, *The Millennial Maze. Sorting Out Evangelical Options*, Downers Grove: IVP, 1992, pp. 37- 63.

as the "objects of missions,"¹³ to use the formula of Gustav Warneck, a later Lutheran missiologist.

I do not argue that the lack of a missionary vision was caused by the amillennial eschatology of the Reformers, but I observe that the two went together and that the Reformers' eschatology did not produce a missionary urge.

Amillennial Orthodoxy and the Conscious Negation of Missions

The Reformers were not missionary minded, but only their "orthodox" successors developed a theology which consciously excluded missions from the duties and even from the options of the church. Arguments against foreign missions varied—as is usually the case when the Bible is being used against its own basic intentions—from the argument that the missionaries would be killed (and possibly eaten) by the heathen to the argument that there was no need for foreign missions since the Catholics were already doing it. But the main argument was strongly "biblical": The command given to the apostles, which these days we often call the Great Commission, was given to them personally (*ad personam*), in their quality of being apostles. Since the apostolate was an extraordinary office of the church, the officers being irreplaceable after their death, their successors, the pastors, were left with nothing but their local parishes to look after.¹⁴ To do missionary work beyond the frontiers of one's parish would have been either interfering in the work of another pastor (and the parish structure is built around the principle of non-interference), or if done beyond the borders of Christendom, would mean the usurpation of the office of the apostles. No Protestant wanted to follow the Roman Catholic abomination of ascribing successors to the apostles!

I have vaguely classified the Reformers' eschatology as "spiritual," meaning that they put little emphasis on eschatology as the final stage of world history. The Orthodox Lutheran theologians took the process even further. For them eschatology was very much a kind of appendix to their

¹³ Martin Luther, *Von den Juden und ihren Lügen*, 1543. *For an overview of Luther's attitudes to the Jews see Christoph Stenschke's review of Thomas Kaufmann: *Luthers "Judenschriften". Ein Beitrag zu ihrer historischen Kontextualisierung*, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011 (in *Jahrbuch für Evangelikale Theologie*, 28 (2014), pp. 290-292.

¹⁴ Johannes Gerhardt, *Locorum Theologicorum cum pro adstruenda veritate*, 1639.

exposition of the Christian doctrine, dealing almost exclusively with the fate of the believer and the unbeliever after death.

From the evidence available to me it is difficult to prove that the orthodox theologians' eschatology extinguished the missionary vision in theologians who took the Bible so seriously. However, there is no doubt that eschatology provided for them no incentive to do missionary work. After all the heathen had had their chance, the apostles having visited all of them, even in America (and if you ask how they got to a continent they knew nothing about—do you doubt the power of God Almighty to get them there?)—and them having rejected the Gospel.

Postmillennialism and the Origin of the Protestant Missionary Movement

Often the year 1792, when William Carey published his now famous *Enquiry into the Obligation of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen*,¹⁵ is taken as the beginning of the Protestant Missionary work. True, 1792 was a decisive date in that Carey took up the impetus of the Great Awakening and "invented" the missionary society as a voluntary agency.¹⁶ But Protestant missions began earlier in America just as the Great Awakening started earlier there.

The Great Awakening's beginnings are usually connected to Jonathan Edwards (1734). The same Jonathan Edward was not only a revivalist, but also a leading theologian and a strong supporter of missionary work among the Native Americans. As a Presbyterian he should have been thoroughly or mutedly amillennial, but revivals regularly go along with new theologies, in his case with a new eschatology, namely postmillennialism.¹⁷

Postmillennialism is a "realistic" eschatology, well expressed in the title of Daniel Whitby's book, published even before Jonathan Edwards: *A Treatise of the Millennium: Shewing hat It Is Not a Reign of Persons Raised from the Dead, but of the Church Flourishing Gloriously for a Thousand Years after the Conversion of the Jews, and the Flowing-in of All Nations to*

¹⁵ Leicester: Ann Ireland, 1792, several reprints.

¹⁶ William Carey, *Enquiry* pp. 83f; Andrew F. Walls, "Missionary Societies and the Fortunate Subversion of the Church," *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 88:2 [1988], pp. 141-155.

¹⁷ C.C. Goen, "Jonathan Edwards: A New Departure in Eschatology" in: *Church History* XXVII (March 1959), pp. 25-40.

Them Thus Converted to the Christian Faith (Paraphrase and Commentary on the New Testament [1703]).

The millennial kingdom will be worldwide, so every nation must be won for it. This is seen in his famous *An Humble Attempt to Promote Explicit Agreement and Visible Union of God's People in Extraordinary Prayer, for the Revival of Religion and the Advancement of Christ's Kingdom on Earth* (Boston 1748), whose call for prayer was received in Scotland and by the English Baptists,¹⁸ among others.

This millennial kingdom will finally come about through divine intervention, though not in a sudden divine action but as the culmination of a process, in which missions (and reform movements) will play a leading role. For some leaders of the Great Awakening even this process had already advanced far.

In postmillennialism missions became closely related to eschatology, and it may need some deeper research to find out if postmillennialism came first or if missions came first. But they clearly went together and cross-fertilized each other.

The Postmillennial Classical Missionary Movement

William Carey got much of his inspiration from Jonathan Edwards through the mediation of his fellow Baptist John Sutcliffe.¹⁹ Carey was as unquestioningly postmillennial as was Jonathan Edwards. This comes clearly out in Carey's *Enquiry*. In its historical section (pp. 14-37) he traces the progress of the Gospel from its inception to the present day. In doing this he makes no fuss about the apostles being extraordinary officers of the church (though as a Calvinist he should have done so), and according to his account the gospel never actually stopped spreading, as witnessed in his times by Elliot and Brainerd, Mr Wesley and foremost by the Moravians. But of late the progress of the gospel had considerably been slowed down, and in his theological sections he clearly shows the obstacle: The regular Calvinist theology of his day, which is nicely summed up in the episode—possibly apocryphal, but if so, well invented—that the elder Ryland told Carey, when he asked during a ministers' fraternal if the command given to the apostles to go into all the world would still be valid today: "Sit down young man, if God wants to convert the heathen, he will do it without your

¹⁸ William Carey, *An Enquiry into the Obligation of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen*, Leicester: Ann Ireland, 1792, p. 79.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

help and mine!" In the statistical section (pp. 38-66, to my knowledge the first ever attempt—and quite a successful one for that—to establish a world religious statistical survey) Carey shows how far the Gospel has reached and, especially, where it still had to reach.

In his final section Carey suggests what should be done in order to reach this goal: To spread the Gospel to all the nations on earth, and a start should be made by founding a Particular Baptist mission.²⁰

This view of church and world history as such is clearly postmillennial, but in his *Enquiry* Carey also uses postmillennial exegesis directly. He sees, for example, Isaiah 60:1 (Surely the Isles shall wait for me; the ships of Tarshish first, to bring my sons from far, their silver, and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord, thy God) as a prophecy of the "time of the glorious increase of the church, in the latter days."²¹ This idea of the "latter-day glory" was not new in England in Carey's time. The famous Congregationalist theologian John Owen anticipated a time of great spiritual prosperity for the church, which included for him success in missions to the nations. But he was convinced that this era would not come about by human action, but by a divine intervention, by a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit.²² Though he did not agree in theory with those who negated the continuing validity of the Great Commission, he agreed in practice with them. Carey also believed in the latter-day glory, but he was willing to do everything (including devising new [democratic, voluntary] ecclesiastical structures!) to bring those days about. Carey's postmillennialism held the firm belief in divine intervention at the end of history or towards the end, but it also believed firmly in human action leading towards it.

The postmillennialism of people like Edward, Brainerd, Elliot, Sutcliffe and Carey made room for missionary action, which neither Calvinist (or Lutheran) amillennialism had permitted nor the "transcendental" incipient postmillennialism of John Owen had accommodated.

After Carey one of the most influential figures in the Classical Missionary Movement was Rufus Anderson. For him postmillennialism (in its missionary variety) was unquestioned. He was convinced that the time for

²⁰ William Carey, *An Enquiry into the Obligation of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen*, Leicester: Ann Ireland, 1792, p. 84.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

²² Stanley Grenz, *The Millennial Maze. Sorting Out Evangelical Options*, Downers Grove: IVP, 1992, p. 53.

the world's conversion had come. He expected the predicted outpouring of the Spirit on all flesh, so that the kingdoms of the world will be the Lord's and his Christ's, to usher in the time when "He will rule from eternity to eternity."²³

The whole Classical Missionary Movement shared the basic ideas of postmillennialism. They expected Christ's return after the millennium, which would come about in a gradual process of revivals and social reform. For some leaders of the Great Awakening this process had already advanced far. For Lyman Beecher the millennium was at the door step, and Charles G. Finney, the famous evangelist, was convinced that the millennium would surely come within three years if the church did her duty.²⁴ Part of this process would be worldwide missionary work: "And doubtless one nation shall be enlightened and converted after another, one false religion and false way of worship exploded after another."²⁵ Equally Christian [Western] civilization would play its part in that process: "The most barbarous nations shall become as bright as England."²⁶ Worldwide missions thus play a role in the process of bringing about the millennium, which role is shared by "Christian culture." This is not Western culture as a whole, but only its best aspects.

Among the missiologists who stressed the "gradual process" was the most famous of the German missiologists, Gustav Warneck,²⁷ who died in 1910. Being somewhat late (as was German missionary work generally compared to English and Dutch),²⁸ he observed the rise of the early Faith Missions, and he did not like what he saw. Not at all, and the thing he

²³ *The Time for the World's Conversion Come*. Missionary Tracts No. 10, Boston: ABCFM, nd. [1837]). For more see Thomas Schirrmacher (ed), *"Die Zeit für die Bekehrung der Welt ist reif." Rufus Anderson und die Selbständigkeit der Kirche als Ziel der Mission*, Bonn: VKW, 1993.

²⁴ William G. McLoughlin, *Modern Revivalism*, New York 1959, p. 105.

²⁵ Jonathan Edwards, *Works*, New York, 1881 vol. I, p. 482.

²⁶ Harvey G. Townsend [ed.], *The Philosophy of Jonathan Edwards from His Private Notebooks*, Eugene OR, 1955, p. 207, quoted in: C.C. Goen, "Jonathan Edwards: A New Departure in Eschatology" in: *Church History* XXVII [March 1959], p. 28.

²⁷ Gustav Warneck, *Evangelische Missionslehre. Ein missionstheoretischer Versuch*, 5 vols., Gotha, 1892-1905.

²⁸ *This applies to the Classical Missions, not to the missions of Pietism, where the German (and Dutch) Moravians were leading.

faulted the new missions for was foremost their (premillennial) eschatology.²⁹

Postmillennialism was born from an optimistic world view,³⁰ which reckoned on an evolution of world history into the fullness of God's Kingdom. The Christian nations were seen as major elements in this process. There is good reason to assume that postmillennial eschatology tends to run parallel with an optimistic *zeitgeist*, such as was created by the Enlightenment among the British Evangelicals, whereas the premillennial eschatology, which was to replace postmillennial eschatology among Evangelicals, would feel at home with a pessimistic *zeitgeist*.³¹

Originally postmillennialism expected a great worldwide revival to crown the gradual process; later more stress was laid on the gradual process, so that postmillennial hope came somewhat close to a Christian evolution and could give way later in some cases to a social gospel more or less devoid of both eschatology and missiology.

If one looks at a good religious map of Africa, it becomes clear that, especially in West Africa, the classical missions' advance stalled at a certain distance from the coast. This happened towards the end of the 19th century. It is true that the missions had their hands full to continue the work that they had begun earlier in the century and which had been very successful, and it can also not be denied that the resources available to them in Europe and America did not allow for any further quick expansion. But it is also true that by then the original postmillennialism of the classical missions and/or the revival movement and the churches that supported them, had declined. Here again cause and effect are difficult to distinguish.

Though the classical missions' advance somewhat stalled in the second half of the 19th century, the missions continued their work, which in the 20th century was marked by a sharp decline in the number of missionaries and (somewhat later) of finance. Presently most of the classical missions could be classified as amillennial.

²⁹ Gustav Warneck, "Die moderne Weltevangolisierungstheorie," *Allgemeine Missionszeitschrift*, 1897, pp. 305ff.

³⁰ David Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain. A History from the 1730s to the 1980s*, pp. 60-63.

³¹ Stanley N. Gundry, "Hermeneutics or Zeitgeist as the Determining Factor in the History of Eschatologies?" in: *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 1970, p. 50.

There might be another argument to explain this decline, again related to eschatology. Missions are the children of revival(s). This is very much true of the classical missions. But revivals usually (or maybe even always) reach only a section of the church. Though the revivalists (especially those of the Great Awakening) usually feel to be faithful daughters and sons of the church, they have their own theological (and in this case eschatological) identity. In the last century and right into this century the classical missions were voluntary associations vicariously doing the work that the church as such should have been doing, relying heavily on the members of the revival fellowships, just one group within the church, but with a postmillennial eschatology. In recent decades the churches (with their money and their amillennial theology) have taken over the classical missions, and in this way presided over a remarkable process of decline.³² The Classical Missionary Movement was at home at the revival fringe of the churches, and so was postmillennial eschatology. "Real" theology, scholarly with at least some knowledge of German, continued to be amillennial—and little interested in missions. I am aware that this description is not the whole truth, and that any explanation for the decline of the classical missions must be more complicated, but maybe there are some elements to ponder.³³

The Christian Brethren: A Non-Church Movement with a New Eschatology

The protracted civil war in America, the delay of the coming Kingdom, the French Revolution and the ensuing wars in Europe all helped to destroy the optimistic world view that had supported (or some may claim brought about) postmillennialism. Just as much as postmillennialism had been an eschatology somewhat off the centre of established church and established theology, so the new eschatology developed—even more—off the centre of mainline theology and mainline church.

For premillennialism as for most theological movements it is difficult to give an exact year, when a new movement begins. And in addition, such a

³² *For the women's side impressively described by Dana Roberts, *American Women in Mission. A Social History of their Thought and Practice*, Macon: Mercer University Press, 1996, pp. 302ff.

³³ *I see the Edinburgh 1910 World Missionary Conference as a point, where the "take over" of the "voluntary mission structures" by the "church structures" was strongly accentuated: Klaus Fiedler, "Edinburgh 1910 and the Evangelicals," *Evangelical Theological Review*, 34/4 (Oct 2010), pp. 53-71.

new movement often claims that its roots go back to distant history, maybe even to the bible. Premillennialism indeed understood itself to be nothing but an exposition of biblical truth, and it could claim ancestors like Papias, Ireneus or Justin Martyr.³⁴ Possibly the first premillennial book of the modern period was published in 1813.³⁵ But premillennialism became a major theological force only in the late 1820s in the wake of the Restorationist Revival of the 1830s, which started in the late 1820s.³⁶ This revival has often been overlooked by revival historians, because it was small compared to the Great Awakening and the Holiness Revival which came before it and after. Since its aim was to restore the original church once more before the second coming of Christ, it tended to be very divisive, because each group had found in the pages of the New Testament a different original church to restore. The other main point was the expectation of the imminent coming of Christ, which all understood in a premillennial way.

A leading group in this revival were the people around George Müller of Bristol and John Nelson Darby of Dublin around whom the Christian Brethren Movement would soon crystallize.³⁷ They never wanted to be a new denomination, but just a renewal movement. But as soon as they started to meet for the breaking of the bread on Sunday mornings, they had de facto become a new denomination. The Brethren developed a unique ecclesiology with no clergy whatsoever, and they also developed a new eschatology. Because they understood themselves to be a non-church movement, they were able to exert influence far exceeding their numerical strength, and the famous evangelist D.L. Moody, the dominating figure of the 1873 revival, the second wave of the Holiness Revival, was strongly influenced by them.

The Brethren were innovative not only in the fields of ecclesiology and eschatology, but also in the field of missions. The first Brethren missionary

³⁴ For a good overview see: Stanley Grenz, *The Millennial Maze. Sorting Out Evangelical Options*, Downers Grove: IVP, 1992, pp. 38-42.

³⁵ William Cuninghame, *Pre-Millennial Advent of Christ Demonstrated from the Scriptures*, 1813.

³⁶ *This is broadly true for England, but the strongest Restorationist Movement in America, the "Stone-Campbell Movement" (Churches of Christ, Disciples etc.) can be dated back to 1801. This movement was postmillennial, and only later a section of it turned premillennial.

³⁷ Frederick Roy Coad, *Prophetic Developments. With Particular Reference to the Early Brethren Movement*, Pinner, 1966.

was Anthony Norris Groves, a Dentist, who, while under training for Anglican Holy Orders realized that according to the Scriptures no human ordination is necessary nor even desirable. Nor would he need—and neither should there be—a missionary society supporting and controlling the missionary. So he and his party went to Baghdad, being directly responsible to God and relying on Him—through prayer alone—for their material needs. (This is the "faith principle" of support, which gave the interdenominational missions their name/nickname "faith missions.")³⁸

For Groves as much as for Darby and Müller the world was not improving, to the contrary, the trend was downwards, from bad to worse. Though the temporal world could not be improved, as many people as possible should escape eternal destruction. This view provided a strong missionary impetus. Another strong impetus came from their way of interpreting the Bible in a literal way. When the Brethren—most ardent Bible students as they were—came to Matthew 24,14: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then the end shall come," they were convinced that they had to do their share to "speed the coming of the king" (2 Peter 3:12).

The Restorationist Revival of the 1830s³⁹

The Christian Brethren, now distinctly a separate denominational family, nevertheless were not alone in their origins. They were part of a revival, less known than the preceding and following ones (Great Awakening [1734] and Holiness Revival [1858]). This revival has often been overlooked by revival historians, because it was small compared to the Great Awakening and the Holiness Revivals which came before it and after. Whereas both revivals just mentioned showed little interest in ecclesiology, this was different with the Revival of the 1830s, since one of its main issues was the restoration of the original church. This obviously led to much diversity of opinion and consequently to the creation of many and different denominations such as the (Open and Exclusive) Brethren, the (Old and

³⁸ For a comprehensive study of his life and theology see: Robert Bernard Dann, *Father of Faith Missions. The Life and Times of Anthony Norris Groves (1795-1853)*, Waynesboro/Bletchley: 2004.

³⁹ *For details see: Klaus Fiedler, "'A Revival Disregarded and Disliked' or What do Seventh-day Adventists, Churches of Christ, Jehovah's Witnesses and the New Apostolic Church have in Common? *Religion in Malawi*, no 15, 2009, pp. 10-19; Klaus Fiedler, "A Revival Disregarded and Disliked" in Klaus W. Müller (ed.), *Mission in fremden Kulturen*, Nürnberg: VTR, 2003.

New) Apostolic Churches, going back to Edward Irving, the Churches of Christ, and the Seventh-day Adventists. It can even be argued that the Jehovah's Witnesses have their—somewhat distant—roots in that same Revival.⁴⁰

These movements, as diverse as they are these days, had two things in common: the concept of restoring the original church and the expectation of the premillennial return of Christ. Edward Irving adopted premillennial eschatology from Jesuit sources. He made known his views in 1825. In 1827 he published his translation of South American Jesuit Manuel De Lacunza's "The Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty" (1812), prefaced by 200 pages of his own, in which he also describes the development of his views, and thus strongly influenced the nascent "prophetic" or "premillennial" movement.⁴¹

It is worth observing that all the denominations going back to the Restorationist Revival kept to premillennialism and that most of them are strongly missionary (sometimes to the disgust of the established churches). Exceptions are some of the Exclusive Brethren and the Catholic [Old] Apostolic Church, which finally majored in ecclesiology and not in eschatology.

The Revival of 1859/1873: Holiness, Missions and Premillennialism

When in the second half of the 19th century the missionary advance of the classical missions began to stall, a new missionary movement was born, again at the fringe of the established churches, namely the interdenominational faith missions.⁴² This movement, started by Hudson and Maria Taylor (China Inland Mission) in 1865, had its spiritual roots in—and got its support from—again a new revival. Its roots, as with all movements, are not easy to trace, but in my opinion its most important

⁴⁰ *For a wider treatment of these concepts see: Klaus Fiedler, "'A Revival Disregarded and Disliked' or What do Seventh-day Adventists, Churches of Christ, Jehovah's Witnesses and the New Apostolic Church have in Common? in: *Religion in Malawi* 15 (2008), pp. 10-28.

⁴¹ Iain H. Murray, *The Puritan Hope. Revival and the Interpretation of Prophecy*, Edinburgh/Carlisle PA 1984, pp. 188-190; for his life see: Jean Christie Root, *Edward Irving. Man, Preacher, Prophet*, Boston 1912.

⁴² Klaus Fiedler, *Klaus Fiedler, The Story of the Faith Missions*, Oxford: Regnum, Sutherland: Albatross, 1994.

roots are in the Holiness Movement going back to Phoebe Palmer and her sister Sarah Lankford (1835). I therefore call this revival the Holiness Revival (others call it the Second Evangelical Awakening). The Revivalists understood sanctification—following the teaching of John Wesley on holiness—as a separate crisis experience after and distinct from conversion. Sanctification would show itself foremost in "power for service," and since many employed that power in missionary work (at home and abroad), the holiness teaching was a powerful incentive for missions.

Another powerful incentive for missions in that revival came from eschatology. The revivalists had individually exchanged the postmillennialism they had learned when they were students against a premillennialism which seemed to them much more biblical (and which may also have been more in tune with the less optimistic *zeitgeist* of the time).⁴³ Typical for these changes is Moody, who learnt premillennial eschatology from Henry Moorhouse, the "boy evangelist" of the English Brethren. He no longer expected Christ to come to crown human efforts, but expected the millennium to break in as the result of Christ's coming.⁴⁴ How important this new vision was for him, is shown by one of his first conversations with Emma Dryer, who later founded the Missionary Training Institute of the Chicago Evangelization Society, nowadays known as Moody Bible Institute.⁴⁵ He asked her if she understood the doctrine of Christ's return and the millennium. She answered in the affirmative. He replied emphatically: "I am mighty glad you know that doctrine. Why! It is the key to the Scriptures. Do you know Mrs Goodwin?" The ensuing conversation on the topic he ended with the words: "Mrs Goodwin understands that doctrine, and you understand it and I understand it. That makes three in Chicago!"⁴⁶ The most famous faith mission publicists and supporters in America, A.T. Pierson and A.J. Gordon, underwent similar theological changes. Pierson followed George Müller,⁴⁷ and for Gordon the acceptance

⁴³ *See the section: "Women and the Emergence of Faith Missions" in Dana Roberts, *American Women in Mission. A Social History of their Thought and Practice*, Macon: Mercer University Press, 1996, pp. 192ff.

⁴⁴ John Pollock, *Moody without Sankey*, London, 1983, pp. 69-74. For his eschatology see: Stanley N. Gundry, *Love Them In. The Life and Theology of D.L. Moody*, Grand Rapids, 1982 (1976), pp. 175-193.

⁴⁵ *For details see: Klaus Fiedler, "Aspects of the Early History of the Bible School Movement" earlier in this book.

⁴⁶ Emma Dryer - Blanchard nd [1923].

⁴⁷ Delavan L. Pierson, *Arthur T. Pierson. A Biography*, London 1912, pp. 142-144.

of premillennial eschatology was as much a crisis experience as sanctification.⁴⁸

Amongst the many founders and leaders of the early faith missions, two should be mentioned for their eschatological views, Grattan Guinness and A.B. Simpson. Fanny Guinness, Grattan Guinness' wife, had founded in 1878 the second faith mission worldwide, the Livingstone Inland Mission in Congo, and together they had founded in 1873 the East London Training Institute, the first missionary training institute of the faith missions and therewith the mother of all bible schools.⁴⁹ Fanny and Grattan Guinness taught historicist premillennialism. This meant that they would take the book of Revelation to be a prediction of church history, and that the fulfillment of it could be seen. All signs of the coming end like the Antichrist (papacy) and the false prophet (Muhammad) had been fulfilled in history except one: that the gospel must be preached all over the world. There is no reason to sit and wait for the fulfillment of this sign, just go and preach to all the world, whatever the sacrifice may be.

A.B. Simpson, the founder of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, held a similar position. For him the coming of Christ was *imminent*, and not to be expected at any moment. For Simpson imminent meant a time span, imminently important for all Christians. They were not to expect Christ any moment, but they were any moment to put all effort into fulfilling the preconditions for his return. This made eschatology a propelling force for missions. In this way the bride (the church) could fix the date for the marriage!⁵⁰

Though the faith mission leaders differed in their way of interpretation, they happily cooperated, sharing the same eschatological urgency. They had realized that the classical missionary movement had stalled, being burdened by heavy debts, and they were convinced that in order to make the last advance possible, the neglected forces of Christianity (women, laymen, people with little education) should be utilized, new missionary

⁴⁸ Adoniram J. Gordon, *How Christ Came to Church. A Spiritual Autobiography with the Life-Story, and the Dream as Interpreting the Man* (By A.T. Pierson, D.D. London 1895), Philadelphia 1895, esp. 24f.

⁴⁹ Klaus Fiedler, "Aspects of the Early History of the Bible School Movement" in: Festschrift Donald Moreland, ed. by Marthinus W. Pretorius: *The Secret of Faith. In Your Heart - In Your Mouth*, Leuven 1992, pp. 62-77. *The article is reprinted in this book.

⁵⁰ Franklin A. Pyles, "The Missionary Eschatology of A.B. Simpson" in: David F. Hartzfeld; Charles Nienkirchen, *The Birth of a Vision*, Regina 1986, pp. 35f.

methods should be employed (like itineration, distribution of literature), and since an ominous sign of the stalling of the classical missions' advance was the debt burden they carried, only money received could be spent. All effort should be made that everyone should have the chance to hear the gospel at least once.

This concept became true. Generally the faith missions did not cut another slice off an already diminishing mission [support] cake, but they added a good piece to it. Hardly any—possibly none—of their founders would have been acceptable to one of the classical missions (because of ill health, lack of education and/or ordination, wrong ecclesiology etc), nor would many of their early missionaries have been accepted, either. What applies to personnel, applies to money, too. Just as the missionary candidates usually did not come from the mainstream of the established churches, but from fellowships, Sunday schools, assemblies, mission halls and independent churches brought into existence or having been revived by the 1859 revival, so did the money come from them.

Neither did the faith missions cut a slice from the mission cake on the field, as they insisted on working among the unreached as many of their names shows: China Inland Mission, Africa Inland Mission, Sudan Interior Mission, Unevangelized Tribes Mission, etc. Indeed, up to about a generation ago there was a lot of cooperation ("mission comity") and very little competition, and even now competition is limited.

The faith missions, much neglected in the writing of church and mission history, did much to push the frontiers of the Christian faith forward (prominently so in Nigeria,⁵¹ Congo, Central and East Africa, Ethiopia), and eschatology was one of their driving forces.

Though the faith missions basically kept their pre-millennial eschatology, a major change of emphasis should be noted, taking the Christian and Missionary Alliance as an example. A.B. Simpson, the CMA's founder, taught the imminence of Christ's return. The imminent return of Christ for him meant that the period to elapse before that event would be short, but a period had to elapse, since one of the signs of the end, the preaching of the gospel to all people, was not yet fulfilled. This meant that missions and eschatology were intimately connected, since the church (not necessary the

⁵¹ "Die religionsgeographische Relevanz der evangelikalen Glaubensmissionen in Afrika," in: K. Rudolph and G. Rinschede: *Beiträge zur Religions/Umwelt-Forschung*. (Geographia Religionum. Interdisziplinäre Schriftenreihe zur Religionsgeographie, vol. 6), Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, 1989, pp. 201-224.

established churches!), that is all true believers, would have to make every possible effort to fulfill this last sign. At the time when A.B. Simpson taught this eschatology, the CMA experienced, after a disastrous start, an unprecedented missionary explosion. A major element in this explosion was the CMA's holiness message of power, consecration and sacrifice, but the eschatology of imminence may well have played a role, too.

Within a brief period, imperceptibly, the CMA's eschatology changed from the expectation of the *imminent* return of Christ to the expectation of the return of Christ *at any moment*. This may seem a small difference, and in terms of the many and varying eschatological concepts it is, but in terms of missiology this shift means an effective de-linking of eschatology and missions. The expectation of Christ's return at any moment is less "realistic" than the expectation of the imminent return of Christ, which obliges the church to do something.

Today in the faith missions the "any moment eschatology" is prevalent, but often mellowed by the conviction that the gospel must be preached to all before Christ's return, though this effort is no longer seen as "the bride fixing the date for the marriage" or "hasting the return of the king."

This process which I just described for the CMA, took place in other missions, too, a process in which, to use technical terms, the historicist premillennial concepts were replaced by futurist premillennial concepts. These futurist premillennial interpretation takes the book of Revelation to predict the end and the immediate period before it, the end-time. Between the messages to the seven churches and the end time message a long blank period (presently about 1800 years) is assumed.

In present day Evangelical circles (which still feed the faith missions), eschatology seems, overall, to be slowly losing weight, a process supported by many predictions, unfulfilled, but confidentially made. There are also occasional Evangelical missiologists who favour a turn to a postmillennial eschatology.

Ever new revivals

The leaders of each revival seem to think theirs is the best, and that after their revival no further revivals are neither needed nor expected. Most of the leaders of the Holiness Revival felt that way, and they were surprised, when the Pentecostal Revival broke out in 1906. Similar attitudes could be observed when the Charismatic Revival began in 1960. Important as those revivals are (Pentecostals are now the largest Protestant denominational family worldwide), they need not be treated in detail here, since they did

not bring a new eschatology. The Pentecostal Movement is very strong in its missionary effort. The Charismatic Movement, which shares Pentecostal theology, seems to have in common with Pentecostalism its early enthusiasm for mission as well as its organizational weakness.⁵² A Charismatic Missionary Movement is developing, but its shape is not yet clear to me. I do not expect it to produce a new eschatology.

Evangelical - Ecumenical

Missions are the children of revival, and as such they cannot be expected to act always in line with established church policy, neither can they be expected to respect such ecclesiastical niceties (or corner stones) like the parochial principle of non interference and no competition. Revivals (and their children, at least as long as they are young) are just subversive. This explains—to some extent—missionary pluralism. The "division" of the Protestant missionary movement into two has often been lamented. But why such a concern in the days of much applauded theological pluralism? Are organizational divisions not just organizational expressions of theological pluralism?

This tenet holds true for ecumenical-Evangelical pluralism, and it applies to eschatology. Ecumenical missions started postmillennial (as the revival did from which they come), Evangelical missions started premillennial (just as the successive revivals that brought them forth). This implies that speaking of a split in the Protestant Missionary Movement is not really correct. They were never one; their theology was different from the start, with eschatology being one major point of difference, and ecclesiology being the other. Evangelical missions started premillennial, despite coming from different revivals and therefore being sometimes at loggerheads with each other, because all the revivals they came from had a premillennial eschatology.⁵³

Theological changes take place in any movement over the generations. The Evangelical movement is still younger, so less change can be expected, and indeed the movement as a whole has kept its eschatology, with changes like that from *imminence* to *any moment* expectation taking place

⁵² For an incipient Charismatic missiology see: Edward Pousson, *Spreading the Flame - Charismatic Churches and Missions Today*, Grand Rapids 1992.

⁵³ *Klaus Fiedler, "Edinburgh 1910, Africa 2010 and the Evangelicals," *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, xxxvi (3) Oct 2010. – In this article I argue that at and before Edinburgh 1910 "Evangelicals" and "Ecumenicals" never were one.

within the movement without disrupting it. This applies to the ecumenical ("classical") missions, too. Changes in eschatology did take place, but gradually and again within the movement. But compared to the Evangelicals, the change was more far reaching (maybe due to the longer time span?), as post-millennial eschatology gave way to Amillennialism. That increased the distance to the evangelical movement, with which the classical missions originally shared millennialism (though the Classical Missions were postmillennial, the Evangelicals premillennial). This change meant that classical mission eschatology was absorbed by the mainstream eschatology of the establishment, just as much as (or because?) the missions were so absorbed.

Anti-missionary evangelical ecclesiologies

So far I have dealt with general evangelical eschatology, and I have made the claim that a "realistic" eschatology expecting a millennium with Christ visibly ruling, is in a special way conducive to missions. To finish this chapter I want to make some reservations, though. In some evangelical circles "extremely realistic" eschatologies were and are in vogue. Their "realism" is based on the futurist premillennial assumption that the book of Revelation is a book designed to describe in a prophetic way the "end-time," the last period of history, which most authors conceive to coincide with their own life time, more or less. They saw the biblical prediction as being fulfilled in the unstoppable rise of Communism (and with it the Soviet Union, the "kingdom of the north"), and the final climax of history would not be the preaching of the gospel to all mankind, even the last tribe and tongue included, but the battle of Armageddon, for which America has to prepare the (nuclear) armour, but in which God alone would give the victory. This (as many believed, realistic) view was perhaps most effectively expressed by Hal Lindsay. Several million of his "Great Late Planet Earth" were sold, with the unstoppable rise of Communism predicted in the book of Revelation as its dominating theme.⁵⁴ His views, though, were more clearly expressed in his *The 1980s: Countdown to Armageddon* with the Antichrist being already among us as a member of the European Parliament.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ *Hal Lindsey with C.C. Carlson, *The Late Great Planet Earth*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1970. The English edition (London: Lakeland, 1971) reads on the cover: "A penetrating look at incredible prophecies involving this generation."

⁵⁵ Hal Lindsey, *The 1980s: Countdown to Armageddon*, Toronto et al: Bantam Books, 1980.

Perhaps no Evangelical group espoused these views officially, but their fascination spread among many. This "extremely realistic" view of eschatology often did not further missions, because it created enmity and, even more efficient as a hindrance to mission, it created fear. Here is a parallel to early premillennialism where the speculative side of it also decreased interest in missions.

To my knowledge, men like Lindsay, after the collapse of Communism, never repented of their false prophecies and instead continued writing books, though with different headings, but in similar style. Their pet enemy has also found a replacement, namely Islam. Here again eschatology in its "extremely realistic" version creates problems for missions, because Muslims are no longer people to be won for Christ, but people conceived as a threat to be resisted by all means, major wars included.

Eschatology, Missiology and Worldview

Eschatology seemingly deals with the future, but it also shapes present world views. Therefore eschatology (or its absence) is important for the life of the church and for its missions. Some varieties of eschatology create missionary energy, others do not. Amillennialism often does not, post-millennialism did so very strongly in the beginning, an impetus that later reduced itself. Then premillennial eschatology began to provide that impetus. Now that premillennial eschatology is undergoing a crisis, it may well be that postmillennialism will get another chance to supply missionary energy at least to the evangelical community in missions.

15 The Post-Classical Missions and Churches in Africa - Identity and Challenge to Missiological Research¹ (1995)

Adrian Hastings and the Threefold Face of Christianity in Africa

In this chapter I want to address the question of Christian identity. Fortunately the times are gone when Catholics and Protestants hardly recognized each other as Christians. Even African Instituted Churches are now seen as genuine churches, by some even as *the* genuine African churches. This view is well reflected in Adrian Hastings' *History of African Christianity*. He divides African Christianity into three groups: Protestant mission churches, Catholic mission churches and Independent churches.² His picture of Protestantism in Africa is not limited to the main line Christian denominations, but seemingly biased in their favour. Hastings hints at this in mentioning for Nigeria the "'non-denominational' societies, fundamentalist and mostly American based."³ He also notes that "these had not been large societies in the past but by 1950 they and the Baptists were expanding in a way many others were not." He also notes with interested criticism that the Africa Inland Mission missionaries in Kenya were rapidly expanding in numbers, while others reduced their personnel, and while John Gatu was calling for a moratorium.⁴ In some ways Hastings treats these missions and churches just as any other Protestant churches and missions, but he also senses that they are in some ways the odd fellows out in decent company, not behaving as anyone else would.⁵ And while he dwells at some length on the spiritual contributions of the AICs, he does not do this with the possible spiritual contributions of the Pentecostal or Faith Mission churches in Africa.

This chapter is an attempt to establish the identity of these "other" Protestants more clearly, and to try to find a place for them in missiological

¹ First published in *Missionalia* 23:1 (April 1995) pp. 92-107.

² Adrian Hastings, *A History of African Christianity 1950 - 1975*, Cambridge University Press, 1986 (1979).

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 45/46.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 227.

⁵ See for example the "more theologically conservative groups" on p. 165.

thinking. There is often a vague feeling that there are "other" Protestants, sometimes they are seen as more conservative, fundamentalist, mainly American, new missions, small missions. But all these "definitions" are somewhat haphazard and often the product of misinformation or bias rather than of knowledge or sympathy.

Pluralism and proliferation of denominations is not only an AIC fact, but also a Protestant fact.

How to Sort out Protestant Pluralism in Africa?

If the fact of pluralism is established, how do we sort out that pluralism? One way to do it is wishful thinking. A German professor ended his article on Africa with the statement that it is expected that by the turn of the 20th to the 21st century half of Africa would be Christian, and that these Christians would show little or no interest in denominations.⁶ The first statement should not be doubted, but I wonder how the author may have convinced himself that within a decade Africans would lose interest in denominations which they are multiplying so rapidly at the moment.

A more serious attempt is the distinction of older and newer missions or churches. The problem with this distinction is that some of these new missions are nearly a hundred years old, older than some of the "old" missions.

Another attempt to come to terms with this pluralism of missions is to distinguish between ecumenical and non-ecumenical missions or churches. There is a major element of truth in it, since the WCC comprises, on the Protestant side, almost exclusively "main-line" churches. But there are exceptions, both "new" churches or missions cooperating with the WCC, and also "old" or "mainline" churches not belonging to it. In addition I feel that to establish identity by negative identification is not a good approach.

Another way to come to terms with Protestant pluralism is to differentiate between "Ecumenicals" and "Evangelicals." This approach definitely takes account of some fundamental differences, but here the problem is that these two groups cannot easily be identified with organizational structures like churches or missions.⁷

⁶ "who make Jesus' message their own, but are not keen to know the denomination of the missionaries or their ecclesiastical tradition" (Hajo Hamer, "Afrika" in: *Evangelisches Lexikon für Theologie und Gemeinde*, vol I, p. 23).

⁷ This is evidenced for example by the letter of the Evangelical participants of the San Antonio conference to the Lausanne II Congress in Manila.

The two last approaches do take account of reality, but they have the common weakness that they allow for two categories only, and in both cases these categories are quite controversial, too.

I am convinced that scholarly honesty demands that we take these "new" missions and churches seriously, that we do not just see them as deviations or as a nuisance. I am of the opinion that a careful typology would help to do them justice.

The historical typology of Protestant Missions

My starting point is what I learnt before my basic theological training in Germany: "Missions are the children of the [1815] Revival." This statement obviously ignored the newer missions, but taking into account the concept of Kenneth Scott Latourette that God pushes church history (mission history included) forward by ever new revivals which bring forth ever new organizations, it may still hold good, if only one letter is added: "Missions are the children of revivals." So I started to classify missions according to the revivals in which they originated. Then I discovered that this concept could also apply to churches, because most churches are born in a revival, at least those churches which bring a new message. This is due to the fact that revivals usually have two tendencies: to revive the existing church(es) and to create new churches.⁸ A classification of Protestant churches in Africa according to their revival origins seems to be appropriate to me because the churches in Africa all have mission and therefore revival roots.

A Historical Typology of Missions and Churches (in Africa)

My claim is that Protestant missions can be easily assigned to a distinct revival origin each. If this is so, each Protestant revival should also produce missions and new denominations. This applies, too, with the exception that the very first Protestant revival, commonly called the Reformation, did indeed produce new churches, but did not produce missions.⁹ But from then onwards the development of missions follows the succession of revivals.

⁸ I do not enter here into the discussion if this fact is commendable or regrettable, nor do I discuss why splits occur and who the guilty party is.

⁹ This is true for the Protestant Reformation, but the Catholic Reformation was highly effective in missionary work, almost all through new missionary orders like the Jesuits.

The Puritan/Pietist Revival

Often Britain is seen as the original home of Protestant missions, but there is a good claim that Protestant missionary work started in what was then New England and what we now call the USA. In 1644 Thomas Mayhew started missionary work among the native Americans of the island of Martha's Vineyard.¹⁰ This missionary work in New England was Puritan in theology and piety and Congregationalist in denominational affiliation.¹¹

On the European Continent Pietism can be seen as a counterpart of the Puritan Revival. Its birth is often dated 1675, when Spener published his book *Pia Desideria*, the Pietistic Revival's programmatic outline.¹² In 1705 the Pietistic Movement gave birth to the Danish-Halle Mission working in Tranquebar in India,¹³ and in 1732 the Moravians (Herrnhut) began their missionary effort which was to make them the foremost missionary force of the century.¹⁴

I do not want to belittle the achievements of these Puritan and Pietistic missionary pioneers, but compared to the next missionary wave they were but predecessors, pointing forward to a time of massive achievement, the Great Century, which Latourette takes to last from 1792 to 1914. He sees it as having been ushered in by William Carey, and in my typology I call those missions, which inaugurated the Great Century, the classical missions. I chose this name, because, at least on the Protestant side, it was these

¹⁰ He died in 1647 on his way to England. More famous are John Elliot and David Brainerd.

¹¹ Bengt Sundkler, *Bantu Prophets in South Africa*, London: OUP for the International African Institute, 1961.

¹² *Philip Jacob Spener, *Pia Desideria*, trans. Theodore G. Tappert, Philadelphia: Fortress, 1964. For a scholarly study of Spener see: Johannes Wallmann, *Philipp Jakob Spener und die Anfänge des Pietismus*, 1970. For a quick overview of his life see *Wikipedia*.

¹³ *For the Tranquebar Mission see: Hans-Werner Gensichen, "Dänisch-hallische Mission," in Gerhard Krause and Gerhard Müller (eds), *Theologische Realencyclopädie*, vol 7, Berlin/New York 1981, pp. 319-322; Arno Lehmann, *Es began in Tranquebar – Die Geschichte der ersten Evangelischen Kirche in Indien*, Berlin, 1956; Julius Richter, "Die Dänish-Hallische Mission in ihrer Bedeutung für die evangelische Missionsgeschichte," *Allgemeine Missionszeitschrift*, 1906, pp. 301-318.

¹⁴ Cf. William Carey's judgement to this extent: William Carey, *An Enquiry into the Obligation of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen*, Leicester 1792, p. 37.

missions who basically changed the religious map of the world. If these missions are the classical missions, then the Pietist and Puritan missions can be termed pre-classical missions. As far as the pre-classical missions still exist, they have largely conformed to the patterns of the classical missions and like them the pre-classical missions belong to ecumenical mission associations.

The classical missions

In the title of his programmatic book William Carey hints already at a major characteristic of the classical missions: He demands that *means* should be employed "for the conversion of the heathen."¹⁵ The major means to be employed was the mission society as a voluntary agency, not in conflict to, but nevertheless in a far reaching independence from the churches.¹⁶ The first of the classical missions was the Particular Baptist Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Heathen (now Baptist Missionary Society), a denominational society. The Missionary Society (later London Missionary Society), founded in 1895 was the first interdenominational classical mission, whose pattern many of the early classical missions followed, for example the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (1810) and the Basel Mission (1815). These missions were interdenominational, but only in so far that they would accept missionaries from denominations with infant baptism.¹⁷ Though the missions were organized as voluntary agencies, the voluntary principle did not apply to the missionaries: They were employees of the mission; they had to obey, even when it took two years to get a reply to an application to open a new mission station.¹⁸ In the classical missions the real missionary was ordained

¹⁵ *William Carey, *An Enquiry into the Obligation of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen*, Leicester: Ann Ireland, 1792.

¹⁶ Andrew F. Walls, 'Missionary Societies and the Fortunate Subversion of the Church', *Evangelical Mission Quarterly* 88:2 (1988), pp. 141-155.

¹⁷ These classical interdenominational missions soon underwent a process of denominationalization which in my opinion makes it now unnecessary to continue to distinguish between denominational and interdenominational classical missions.

¹⁸ Peter Hinchliff, "Voluntary Absolutism: British Missionary Societies in the Nineteenth Century" in: W.J. Sheils and Diana Wood, *Voluntary Religion*, London 1986, pp. 363-379.

and male, but women were given a role as wives and as 'missionaries' assistants.¹⁹

The revival which brought forth the classical missions was the Great Awakening, whose beginning is commonly dated 1734 in the congregation of Jonathan Edward in New England of the United States. In Britain the dominating leaders were Charles and John Wesley, whose revival experiences ("conversion") date from 1738. Though conversion was the central message of the Great Awakening, its message was not confined to individual conversion. Though not free of individual Christian rigidity, the general atmosphere was one of cultural optimism. The theological expression of this cultural optimism was the Great Awakening's postmillennial eschatology. A process of revivals and social reform²⁰ would culminate in the coming of the millennium, after which Christ would return in glory. Part of this process would be worldwide missionary work: "And doubtless one nation shall be enlightened and converted after another, one false religion and false way of worship exploded after another."²¹ Equally Christian [Western] civilization would play its part in that process: "The most barbarous nations shall become as bright as England."²²

The post-classical missions

The classical missions did change the religious world map considerably, but at some point or other in the second half of the 19th century their advance stalled. They had extended as far as they could, and the declining revival

¹⁹ This position was clearly formulated by Gustav Warneck, the leading missiologist of the German speaking classical missions. In reality there were exceptions to this, as Mary Slessor proves. That this position did not go unchallenged by women in the homeland either is shown by the creation of the Women's United Missionary Society (1860). See R. Pierce Beaver, *American Protestant Women in World Mission. A History of the First Feminist Movement in North America*, Grand Rapids 1980 (1968: All Loves Excelling).

²⁰ For some leaders of the Great Awakening this process had already advanced far. For Lyman Beecher the millennium was at the door step, and Charles G. Finney was convinced that the millennium would surely come within three years if the church did her duty (William G. McLoughlin, *Modern Revivalism*, New York 1959, p. 105).

²¹ Jonathan Edwards, *Works*, New York 1881 vol I, p. 482.

²² Harvey G. Townsend [ed.], *The Philosophy of Jonathan Edwards from His Private Notebooks*, Eugene OR 1955, 207, quoted in: C.C. Goen, "Jonathan Edwards: A New Departure in Eschatology" in: *Church History* XXVII [March 1959], p. 28).

fervour (on top of the high mortality rate from fever in many areas of Africa) made it more difficult to procure men and means to keep the work previously commenced going, let alone expand into hitherto unreached areas. For this renewed expansion new forces were necessary, and these were provided by new revivals. These new missions do not negate the central position of the classical missions but support it. In as much as they built on the classical foundations, they were quite different from the classical missions, just as much as the revivals from which they came differed from the revival which brought forth the classical missions. All missions which have their spiritual roots in a revival later than the Great Awakening, I classify as post-classical missions.

This term encompasses quite different mission movements and quite different churches, but they also have things in common, for example a pre-millennial eschatology and a more or less evangelical piety. The post-classical churches and missions do not expect the world to become better and better until God ushers in the Kingdom, but they expect the world to move from bad to worse, and after that Christ would return to rule on earth for a thousand years.

Evangelical piety is intensely personal, often rigorist, sometimes otherworldly, but to accuse it to be devoid of a social application of the Gospel would be bending facts to prejudice.

Another, and perhaps the most important factor, which is common to the post-classical churches and missions and in which they differ basically from the classical missions is the concept of the church. Simplifications must be avoided, but in general the classical churches are folk churches with infant baptism, whereas the concept of the church for the post classical missions is mainly that of the "gathered" church, or free church, more frequently with believers' baptism than with infant baptism.

The post-classical missions and churches have their roots in four different revivals, each of which had different emphases in theology and spirituality.

(1) The Restorationist Revival (around 1830)²³

This revival brought forth very diverse denominations: The Brethren (who even claim not to be a denomination), the Apostolic Churches (going back to Edward Irving), the movement of the Disciples/Churches of Christ/Christian Churches (the Stone-Campbell Movement),²⁴ the Nazarenes, and (if one takes the followers of Miller as predecessors into account), the Seventh-day Adventists.²⁵ These movements, as diverse as they are, have two basic tenets in common: The fervent anticipation of the Lord's coming and the equally fervent attempt to restore the New Testament church (once more before the end).

This endeavour produced differing concepts: The Brethren came to the conclusion that the original church could not be restored anymore, so that believers would "represent" the original church and "just assemble in biblical simplicity." The Campbellites decided that strict congregational principles should be restored. The Apostolics decided that exactly the opposite should be done, namely appointing apostles once more before Christ's return and establishing a highly centralized worldwide church structure.²⁶

²³ For this revival I am not aware of a commonly used name. The name I have chosen tries to reduce the revival to one common feature. *For details see: Klaus Fiedler, "'A Revival Disregarded and Disliked' or What do Seventh-day Adventists, Churches of Christ, Jehovah's Witnesses and the New Apostolic Church have in Common?" *Religion in Malawi* 15 (2008), pp. 10-28.

²⁴ *The Churches of Christ are strong in Malawi. At Mzuzu University Mark Thiesen is working on a PhD to write their history in Malawi with a strong study of the American origins.

²⁵ *Malawian universities have since produced three PhDs on the SDA Church: Stefan Höschle, *Christian Remnant - African Folk Church: The History of Seventh-Day Adventism in Tanzania, 1903-1980*, PhD, University of Malawi, 2005; Macleard Banda, *"The Remnant and its Mission" An Investigation into the Interaction of the Seventh-day Adventist Church with Society in Malawi*, PhD, Mzuzu University, 2014; Frank Chirwa, *A Critical Examination of the Changing Role of Women in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Malawi: A Historical, Theological and Socio-Cultural Analysis*, PhD, Mzuzu University, 2014. More are in their early stages.

²⁶ When these apostles died, the discussion arose whether they could be replaced. The Old Apostolics decided that this could not be done (and so destined themselves to virtual extinction), whereas the New Apostolics decided that apostles were to be a permanent feature of the church (and became a vigorous worldwide movement).

From the missiological perspective, the Restorationist Revival in form of the Brethren Movement contributed two elements, which were later to become more important, the so called "faith principle" of financial support²⁷ and the conviction that ordination by the laying on of human hands is not necessary, as long as someone is ordained by the "pierced hands of Christ."²⁸

(2) The Holiness Revival (1859/1873)

All revivals both renew existing churches and split them, though to differing degrees. Whereas the Restorationist Revival with its strong ecclesiological concern majored in the creation of new denominations, the next revival with its emphasis on holiness brought forth fewer new denominations²⁹ and a greater revival of existing denominations. The revival's message was conversion and great evangelists—of whom Dwight Lyman Moody is the most famous—were its leaders. But not only conversion: Holiness as a second crisis experience (in the Arminian understanding) was the other main emphasis.³⁰

The Holiness Movement cut across all Protestant denominations,³¹ and in Britain it found strong support in the Anglican Church.³² The movement's

²⁷ The missionaries would look for their material needs to God in faith and prayer, who would supply their needs through his children. Hudson Taylor provided the formula: "God's work done in God's way will not lack God's supply."

²⁸ Christ, the Son of God, hath sent me
Through the midnight lands;
Mine the mighty ordination
Of the pierced hands.

(Frances Bevan, *Hymns of Ter Steegen, Suso and Others*, London 1894). The (anonymous) poem on the apostle Paul was by Frances Bevan, a member of the Brethren Movement. *For context see: Klaus Fiedler, *The Story of Faith Missions*. Regnum/Lynx: Oxford, 1994; also Albatross Books, Southerland NSW Australia, 1994; Reprinted by Regnum Books Int., 1995, ch. 6.

²⁹ To name some of the more important ones: Free Methodists, Salvation Army, Church of the Nazarene.

³⁰ Leading teachers of holiness were Phoebe Palmer, with whose sanctification experience in 1835 the beginning of the Holiness Movement can be dated, and Hannah Withall Smith.

³¹ It also influenced Lovedale in 1874 and later the Livingstonia Mission in Northern Malawi. For Livingstonia see: Silas S. Ncozana, *Spirit Possession and*

integrating element were (holiness) conferences, of which Keswick (since 1875) still is the most famous. The holiness denominations were always keen on world missions, but being small they could not achieve so much.³³

The major contribution of the Holiness Movement to world missions was not the founding of a number of holiness missions, but the interdenominational faith missions, of which the China Inland Mission, founded by Hudson and Maria Taylor in 1865, is the first and most famous.³⁴ The faith missions (so called by outsiders because of the "faith principle" of financial support) can be recognized in most cases by their original names, which usually contain the geographical area the mission wants to work in, further some attribute like "Inland"³⁵ or "Evangelistic," and finally the word "Mission."³⁶

The faith missions differed considerably from the classical missions. With the Brethren they took ordination lightly, with the Holiness Revival they gave women, single³⁷ or married, the full status of missionaries.³⁸ With the 1830 revival they were premillennialist, but applied this conviction less to futuristic speculation, but rather to an intense effort to reach the

Tumbuka Christians 1875 - 1950, PhD University of Aberdeen, 1985. *Published as: *The Spirit Dimension in African Christianity*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2002.

³² In the Anglican Church in Africa the 1904 Pilkington Revival (Uganda) and the East African Revival (Rwanda, 1929) originated in the Holiness Movement.

³³ See for example: Timothy L. Smith/W.T. Purkiser, *The Story of the Nazarenes*, 2 vls., Kansas City 1962/1983.

³⁴ For an analysis of the China Inland Mission's principles see: Daniel W. Bacon, *From Faith to Faith. The Influence of Hudson Taylor on the Faith Missions Movement*, Singapore 1984.

³⁵ This name segment expresses the basic idea of the faith missions that they do not want to compete with any existing missions. This in fact they rarely did in the early decades.

³⁶ Typical names are China Inland Mission, Africa Inland Mission, Sudan Interior Mission, Africa Evangelistic Band, South Africa General Mission, Sudan United Mission. Atypical is Christian and Missionary Alliance or Örebro Missionsförening.

³⁷ One of these single lady missionaries, Malla Moe, was honoured in 1992 by a special stamp and a beautiful first day cover issued by the Lesotho Post Office. *Her Biography is: Maria Nilsen, Paul H. Sheetz, *Malla Moe*, Chicago: Moody Press, ⁸1980 (1956).

³⁸ In this aspect most of them were more progressive in the outgoing 19th century than in the outgoing 20th century.

unreached with the gospel.³⁹ With the classical missions they subscribed to the voluntary principle, but carried it further: The missionaries were not employees of the mission, but members, and the centre of power was to be on the mission field, not at the home office. Another important element is the international character of many faith missions,⁴⁰ which makes it wrong to brand them as "mostly American."

(3) The Pentecostal Revival (1906)

Revivalists always claim that they do not bring a new message, but just the same old Gospel, and they usually expect no other revival to come after theirs. But just as much as their message was an innovation, when they first preached and lived it, so others after them at some point in history would start to preach and live the same old Gospel in yet another way, again based on a new reading of Scripture. This was the fate of the Holiness Movement, too. When its fervour had just started to decline, it gave birth to a new revival movement, the Pentecostal Movement, which originated in Los Angeles in 1906 under the most effective leadership of a little educated preacher (William Seymour), whose father had been a slave.⁴¹

The Pentecostal Movement puts all emphasis on the Holy Spirit, and today it is the fastest growing major denominational bloc, comprising more members than any other of the classical Protestant denominational blocs.⁴²

(4) The Charismatic Revival (1960)

The teaching of this revival is quite similar to the Pentecostal teaching. But its history is different: The Pentecostal Revival was born at the edges of the mainline denominations, and it was soon expelled. The Charismatic Revival started deep in the mainline denominations, and still has its home largely in

³⁹ They often based their argument on Matthew 24:14, where Jesus made the preaching of the gospel to all nations a prerequisite of his second coming.

⁴⁰ One of the most international today, including many non-Western missionaries, is WEC International, founded in 1913 by C.T. Studd in North Eastern Congo.

⁴¹ For an interesting analysis of Pentecostal origins from an African viewpoint see: Allen H. Anderson, *Bazalwane. African Pentecostals in South Africa*, Pretoria 1991.

⁴² Pentecostal churches are strongest in South America, where up to 90% of all Protestants are Pentecostals. For a study of Pentecostal church growth see: Andy Kennedy, *A Historical and Missiological Investigation of the Growth of the Assembléia de Deus in Pará, Brazil, from 1980 to 2010*, PhD, Evangelical Theological Faculty Leuven, 2013

them.⁴³ But the Charismatic Movement is increasingly developing new churches (like the so called "House Churches" in Britain)⁴⁴ which also want to share in the worldwide missionary effort. In their nascent missionary endeavour the local church often takes on the role of the missionary society.

Fundamentalist Missions

One of the most misused terms today is "fundamentalist" and a great variety of pretty diverse groups have been labelled with this term. This has gone so far that I am convinced that the use of the term should be forbidden for theologians (assuming that there is any authority to do such a thing), because of its strong derogatory connotations.

In one context I nevertheless feel free to use it, namely for those people, churches and missions which gladly apply the term to themselves. There are not many Fundamentalists worldwide, but they are there. Among the Fundamentalists two groups should be distinguished: The "fighting" Fundamentalists, which broke off from the main line denominations, when these "drifted into liberalism" in the 1930s, and the "quiet" Fundamentalists, who withdrew from post-classical churches to form independent local churches.⁴⁵

The basic tenet of both groups is second degree separation, which means not only separation from evil and error, but also from all organizations, churches or individuals that do not separate themselves from evil and false doctrine.⁴⁶ Their involvement in foreign missions is very limited. Often Fundamentalists are confused with Evangelicals, but as

⁴³ This includes a strong Catholic Charismatic Movement.

⁴⁴ *In Malawi the Charismatic denominations have become clearly stronger than the Charismatic Movement in the mainline churches. The largest Charismatic denomination is Living Waters. For the oldest Charismatic denomination in Malawi see: Khetwayo Banda, Word Alive Ministries International (WAMI) and its Wholistic Mission, MA, Mzuzu University, 2012. For developments in the Charismatic Movement see: Felix Nyika, "From Revival to Apostolic Networks: The Historic Development of Malawian Neocharismatic Churches," *Religion and Culture*, 2013, pp. 12-22.

⁴⁵ *For more see: Klaus Fiedler, *Ganz auf Vertrauen. Geschichte und Kirchenverständnis der Glaubensmissionen*, Giessen/Basel: Brunnen, 1992, pp. 197-204, also p. 123.

⁴⁶ The World Council of Churches is seen as one of the most evil institutions.

Fundamentalists refuse fellowship and cooperation with Evangelicals, the two should be clearly kept apart.

An Attempted Evaluation

Back to Adrian Hastings: He is surprised that at a time when all (decent) missions decrease the number of their missionaries, some don't, and other missions even start work in areas which had been pretty much covered by the "older" missions. One explanation for this fact is the life cycle of movements, missions included. The classical missions started earlier, so it can be expected that the phase of mission euthanasia will be reached earlier. It can also be expected that missions born later will learn certain lessons somewhat later than those born earlier.

Another interpretation would start with the concept of the gathered church, which almost everywhere requires a higher number of ministers per 1000 members. So why not have a higher missionary density?

In spite of the paternalistic Western claim that the denominational differences, Western as they are, mean nothing to Africans, denominations and denominational differences mean a lot in Africa. Therefore the multitude of missions must not be seen as just answering a Western need of mission self-fulfillment or denominational self-fulfillment, but equally so as answering an African demand for spiritual fulfillment. It seems to be obvious by now that Africans, in spite of some contrary Western claims, were not happy under one-party political systems. Why should they opt for ecclesiastical one-party systems?

It is very common to decry denominational pluralism in Africa, at least as far as "mission" churches are concerned, whereas in the case of the African Instituted Churches pluralism is seen as a sign of vitality. I suggest not to limit "true African spirituality" to the AICs (and if so, which would be the most truly African of the many?), but to see the involvement in "mission" churches also as a possible expression of genuine African spirituality. Further I suggest seeing denominational pluralism not primarily as a sign of disruption, but of spiritual vitality. To support this claim I would like to point to those countries in Europe where the Protestant church is the most united and where church attendance is the lowest.⁴⁷

My final evaluation tries to set the pluralistic African scene into a worldwide context of Protestant main line decline. This is strongest in

⁴⁷ Here Denmark competes with Sweden and Norway for the lowest church attendance rates around 2% of church members.

America, where the Counciliar Protestant churches have become a minority among the Protestants. This shows also in missionary statistics. The number of missionaries with ecumenical affiliations is less than a fifth of all missionaries, and this decline of missionary numbers is no longer being compensated by comparatively higher financial power. There is indeed quite some truth in the term "old line churches" instead of "main line churches."

Europe presents a similar picture, though less dramatic. The WCC related missionary associations no longer represent the majority of missionaries. Retrenchment seems the order of the day because membership of the European main line churches is declining at an alarming rate. The Evangelical churches usually hold their own or grow slowly, while some Charismatic churches register high growth rates.⁴⁸

In Africa the picture is still different. The mainline churches still grow, but often not as fast as the population.⁴⁹

Identity

I think I have assembled enough material to make a genuine plea to church historians and missiologists as well as scholars on other levels, to take the post-classical missions and churches as an entity of their own, deserving scholarly attention in their own right. Maybe a better term than post-classical can be found. I make this plea to take the "post-classicals" as a separate entity in spite of the fact that quite a number of "post-classical" Protestants are happy to be just Protestants.

The Challenge to Missiological Research

General

Most of the scholarly attention in African church history and in missiology has been directed to the Classical Churches and to the African Instituted Churches. There are also some (though not many) detailed studies of a faith mission or a faith mission church or of other post-classical churches and

⁴⁸ Patrick Johnston in his most recent *Operation World* separates in many statistics Evangelicals (including Charismatics) from other Protestants, and some of his figures are quite convincing, even if one admits that a definition and demarcation of "Evangelical" is not easy.

⁴⁹ This is, for the sake of comparison, also true for the worldwide Roman Catholic Church.

missions, but the aim should be to move beyond the monograph stage and to attempt an analysis of these research findings and a definition of wider identities than those of individual missions or churches.⁵⁰

The case of Malawi

Malawi is largely a Christian country (80%). Correct statistics are difficult to come by, but probably one third of the Christians are Catholics, one third are mainline Protestants (Presbyterians, Anglicans) and the remaining third must be divided between post-classicals and AICs. It is obvious that the Anglican Church has been stagnating, and that many of the post-classical churches grow fast.⁵¹ To my knowledge no research into the respective dynamics has been done up to now.

The situation is similar in terms of historical research. Though much more could be done, there is a considerable body of solid research on the history of the Anglican and the Presbyterian Missions.⁵² On the post-classical missions no major book has yet been published,⁵³ the few booklets

⁵⁰ I have attempted that for the interdenominational faith missions (Klaus Fiedler, *Ganz auf Vertrauen, Geschichte und Kirchenverständnis der Glaubensmissionen*, Brunnen Verlag Gießen/Basel 1992). *The English version, somewhat different, is: Klaus Fiedler, *The Story of Faith Missions*. Regnum/Lynx: Oxford, 1994; also Albatross Books, Southerland NSW Australia, 1994; Reprinted by Regnum Books Int., 1995, with the subtitle: *From Hudson Taylor to Present Day Africa*.

⁵¹ One of the fastest growing churches is the Seventh-day Adventist Church, which by now has about 150,000 full members. *In 2013 the same figure was over 300,000.

⁵² Also on the Catholic missions which I classify also as classical missions, because they go back to a Catholic revival that ran parallel, though with some delay, to the Great Awakening. The pre-classical mission orders only recently came to Malawi and play a limited role. (Different in my personal life: The Jesuits of Zomba offered me hospitality for 8 months, which I gladly accepted when political interference made it impossible for me to live in a university house.) *See also my article: "The Cross and Easter" in this book.

⁵³ *This has since changed: Some "post-classical" books are: Hany Longwe, *Christians by Grace – Baptists by Choice. A History of the Baptist Convention of Malawi*, Mzuzu: Mzuni Press, 2011; Hany Longwe, *Identity by Dissociation. A History of the Achewa Providence Industrial Mission*, Mzuzu: Mzuni Press, 2013; Molly Longwe, *Growing Up*, Zomba: Kachere, 2006; Rachel NyaGondwe Banda [Fiedler], *Women of Bible and Culture. Baptist Convention Women in Southern Malawi*, Zomba: Kachere, 2005; Yonah Matemba, *Matandani. The Second Adventist Mission in Malawi*, Zomba: Kachere, 2003; Henry Church, *Theological Education that Makes a*

are hardly available, and the few dissertations at various levels are practically unknown in the country and are almost inaccessible even to research scholars. Taking into account that the first post-classical mission (Zambezi Industrial Mission) entered Malawi in 1892,⁵⁴ this is regrettable in scholarly terms.

In Malawi interest in African Instituted Churches, to the contrary, is much higher. From this the post-classical churches benefit, too, because seven post-classical missions go back to the Baptist Joseph Booth, who began the work of the Zambezi Industrial Mission in 1892.⁵⁵ But interest is concentrated on John Chilembwe, not as the founder of a post-classical mission (the mission of the American National Baptist Convention, Inc.), but on him seen as the founder of the first African Instituted Church.⁵⁶ As far as post-classical missions are of relevance for the Chilembwe story, they received scholarly treatment.⁵⁷

At the level of theological education at the University and near to it there is a clear classical dominance. Not that other students would not have been welcome, but simply there was little or no contact.⁵⁸

Difference. Church Growth in the Free Methodist Church in Malawi and Zimbabwe, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2002.

⁵⁴ The second was the Nyasa Industrial Mission (1893), the third was the South Africa General Mission (now Africa Evangelical Fellowship) which started work in Nsanje District in 1895.

⁵⁵ *Klaus Fiedler, *The Making of a Maverick Missionary. Joseph Booth in Australasia*, Zomba: Kachere, 2008.

⁵⁶ I do not classify the African Baptist Assembly (Providence Industrial Mission) as an AIC. Chilembwe, though born in Malawi, came to Malawi in 1899 as a missionary of the National Baptist Convention, Inc., one of the two largest black Baptist denominations in the USA. The African Baptist Assembly never broke the links to its parent church. Therefore I prefer to classify Chilembwe (and his successor Malekebu) as "foreign missionaries in their own land," similar to Tiyo Soga in South Africa and Samuel Crowther in Nigeria. *For the history see: Patrick Makondesa, *The Church History of Providence Industrial Mission*, Zomba: Kachere, 2006.

⁵⁷ George A. Shepperson and Thomas Price, *Independent African: John Chilembwe and the Origins, Setting and Significance of the Nyasaland Native Rising of 1915*, Edinburgh 1958. Harry Langworthy wrote a major biography of Joseph Booth, yet unpublished. *Published as: Harry Langworthy, *"Africa for the African": The Life of Joseph Booth*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1996.

⁵⁸ *Since then this has changed both for students and lecturers.

Since about a year [1993] the Department has begun to take up the challenge of this fourth group besides Protestants, Catholics and African Instituted Churches.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ *Since then 6 PhDs and 14 MAs on the history of the post-classical missions and churches have been produced: **PhDs**: (1) **Henry Church**: The Impact of Theological Education upon Church Growth in the Free Methodist Church in Malawi, PhD, University of Malawi, 1999; (2) **Stefan Höschele**, "Christian Remnant - African Folk Church: The History of Seventh-Day Adventism in Tanzania, 1903-1980," PhD, University of Malawi, 2005; (3) **Reinhard Frey**, The History of the Zambia Baptist Association, PhD, University of Malawi, 2006; (4) **Hany Longwe**, Democratization of the Christian Faith: The Influence of the Baptist Doctrine of the "Priesthood of All Believers" on the History of the Baptist Convention of Malawi (BACOMA), PhD, University of Malawi, 2008; (5) **Macleard Banda**, "The Remnant and its Mission." An Investigation into the Interaction of the Seventh-day Adventist Church with Society in Malawi, PhD, Mzuzu University, 2014; (6) **Frank Chirwa**, A Critical Examination of the Changing Role of Women in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Malawi: A Historical, Theological and Socio-Cultural Analysis, PhD, Mzuzu University, 2014. **MA**s (1) **Yonah Matemba**: The History of Matandani Mission of Seventh-day Adventists, Neno, Malawi, 1908-1989, MA, University of Malawi, 2000; (2) **Hany Longwe**: Identity by Dissociation: The First Group to Secede from Chilembwe's Church: A History of Peter Kalemba and the Achewa Providence Industrial Mission (APIM), MA, University of Malawi, 2000 (3) **Rachel NyaGondwe Banda**: Liberation through Baptist Polity and Doctrine. A Reflection on the Lives of Women in the History of Women in the Baptist Convention in Southern Malawi, MA, University of Malawi, 2001; (4) Ulf Strohbehn: Pentecostalism in Malawi. A History of the Apostolic Faith Mission in Malawi, 2002 (5) **Rhodian Munyenyenbe**, Inculturation in Malawi. A Study of the Charismatic Movement, MA, University of Malawi, 2005; (6) **Patrick Makondesa**: The Ecclesiastical History of the Providence Industrial Mission 1900-1940, MA, University of Malawi, 2002; (7) **Macleard Banda**, Mission by All to All: A Study of the History of Seventh-day Adventist Church Lunjika Mission 1932-1995, MA, University of Malawi, 2006; (8) **Bright Kawamba**, The Blantyre Spiritual Awakening 1969-1986: an Antecedent of the Charismatic Movement in Malawi, MA, University of Malawi, 2013. (9) **Towera Mwase**, The Marriage Instructions for Girls and Women in Mzuzu Churches, MA, Mzuzu University, 2012. (10) **Khetwayo Banda**, Word Alive Ministries International (WAMI) and its Wholistic Mission, MA, Mzuzu University, 2012; (11) **Richard Gadama**, The Bible Believers in Malawi: History, Teachings and Practices (1977-2011), MA, Mzuzu University, 2012; (12) **Bernard Kalukusha**, The History of the Free Methodist Church in Malawi from 1969 to 2011, MA, Mzuzu University, 2013. (13) **Boston Khonje**, A Historical Study of the Establishment and Contribution of the Student Christian Organization of Malawi (SCOM) to the Malawian Society (1961-2012), MA, Mzuzu University, 2014. (14) **Stanley Chipeta**, An Examination of the

If this revival typology is applied to Malawi, the following chart could result:

Revival	Date	Emphasis	Denominations	Missions	In Malawi
Reformation	1517	Scripture alone, faith alone, grace alone	Lutherans, Reformed/Presbyterians, Anglicans	None	None
Puritanism/Pietism	1581/1675	Personal Conversion and practical Christianity	Congregationalists Baptists, Moravians (Herrnhut)	Few: Congregationalists, Moravians	None
Great Awakening	1734 (1792)	Personal conversion and practical Christianity. Post-millennial eschatology	Created the missionary vision of the Reformation ("classical") denominations. Methodists	The Great Missionary Revival (the classical missions): BMS 1792; LMS 1795; CMS 1799 and many others	UMCA (Anglican) 1861; Free Church of Scotland Mission (Livingstonia) 1875; Church of Scotland Mission (Blantyre) 1876; Dutch Reformed Church Mission (Nkhoma) 1889
Restorationist Revival	1830s	Restoration of NT Christianity. Pre-millennial eschatology. Strong ecclesiastical emphasis.	Christian Brethren; Churches of Christ; Apostolic Churches; Seventh-day Adventists; (Jehovah's Witnesses)	The new denominations developed missionary work not long after being founded	Seventh-day Adventists (1893/1902); Church(es) of Christ (1906); Jehovah's Witnesses/Watchtower (1909/37); New Apostolic Church (1923)
Holiness Revival	1859/1873	Conversion, sanctification, pre-millennial eschatology	Free Methodists, Church of the Nazarene, Salvation Army	Interdenominational faith missions (1865); some denominational missions	Zambezi Industrial Mission (1892); Nyasa Industrial Mission (1893); South Africa General Mission (1895); Holiness denominations (Church of the Nazarene, Salvation Army, Free Methodists)
Pentecostal Revival	1906	Full Gospel, Charismatic gifts	Assemblies of God and other Pentecostal or Apostolic Churches		Assemblies of God (1930); Pentecostal Holiness Association (1932); Apostolic Faith Mission (1932); others after 1945

Influence of Selected Pauline Texts on the Role of Women in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Malawi, MA, Mzuzu University, 2014. Both universities have a number of Bachelor's dissertations on the post-classical missions and churches and there is quite some ongoing research as well.

Charismatic Revival	1960	Similar to Pentecostal Revival	Started mainly within the classical ("mainline") denominations	Missionary movement only developing	Blantyre Christian Centre; Living Waters Church, Agape Life Church and others
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16 "A Revival Disregarded and Disliked" or What do Seventh-day Adventists, Churches of Christ, Jehovah's Witnesses and the New Apostolic Church have in Common?¹ (2008)

Writing (Church) History

As historians we do not just collect pieces of information, add them up, accumulate and display them. Instead we *organize* information and by doing so we *interpret* history. There is nothing like "objective" history. All writing of history is interpreting history, and it is not final. Historical truth is always interpreted truth, and if someone claims to write "just the facts" or to be "objective," it only shows that the author has not yet become aware of her or his own bias.

Though no historian can be *objective*, that does not absolve any historian from being *factual*. The acknowledgement that no one can be objective is no excuse for weak scholarship. But assuming that our facts are real facts, the question still has to be settled *how* to organize and thereby interpret them.

In writing church history the question must be decided which role God is to be assigned in our historiography. Some historians do not believe in God, and this shows in their writings. Others do not believe, but as keen and fair observers they are able to conceive of and describe religion as a serious and sensible human activity.

I am convinced that in Evangelical church historiography God should have a definite role. I suggest to be humble and not to identify events too easily as a divine intervention.² I propose at least two criteria (1) God is Trinity (2) Salvation is at the very centre of God's activity in the world.

¹ Published in Klaus W. Müller (ed), *Mission in fremden Kulturen*. Edition Afem Mission Academics vol. 15, Nürnberg: VKW, 2003. Also published as: Klaus Fiedler, "'A Revival Disregarded and Disliked' or What do Seventh-day Adventists, Churches of Christ, Jehovah's Witnesses and the New Apostolic Church have in Common?" *Religion in Malawi* 15 (2008), pp. 10-28.

² When reading records of the 1930s, I came across several attempts by Evangelicals to describe the coming to power of Adolf Hitler, a person as close to the Antichrist as one can possibly be, as a divine intervention in German history. —

Revival sequence 1517 and beyond

As a church historian I follow the concept of the most famous mission historian, Kenneth Scott Latourette. He based his work on the assumption that the Holy Spirit moves forward church history by bringing in ever new revivals which produce ever new organizations.³ While this concept seems to be applicable all of church history,⁴ I confine myself in this chapter to the time since 1517, and only to the Protestant side of it. Below is the familiar sequence of the major revivals:⁵

1 The Reformation

The beginning is usually dated 1517, when Luther nailed the 95 theses on indulgencies to the door of the castle church in Wittenberg.⁶ The Reformation produced the Lutheran, Reformed/Presbyterian, Anglican and Anabaptist (Mennonite) Protestant denominational families. The

* Among the German Moravian missionaries in South Tanzania there were Hermann Schnabel (Mwaipopo) and Joseph Busse (Mwambungu) who believed that Hitler's coming to power in 1933 was part of Salvation History (Klaus Fiedler, *Christianity and African Culture. Conservative German Protestant Missionaries in Tanzania 1900-1940*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1999, pp. 161-162). When repatriated to Germany, Busse saw the reality and reversed his position, joining the Confessing Church (*Ibid.* p. 167), while Schnabel lost and renounced his Christian faith (Hermann Schnabel, Erklärung an die Ältesten der Gemeinde Niesky, 31.7.1946).

³ To this I would add "and denominations." Latourette does not say this, but his work clearly shows it. He even says that in "Protestantism new life has expressed itself in fresh denominations or in organizations" (Kenneth Scott Latourette, *Advance through Storm. A.D. 1914 and after with Concluding Generalizations*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan 1976 [1945], p. 417.

⁴ For the pre-Reformation periods, Latourette sees revivals as closely aligned with new religious orders.

⁵ Such a brief description of such major movements necessitates an amount of simplification, and does not allow exceptions to be stated. For dates given, especially in dating the beginnings of a movement, there are often alternatives.

⁶ This door also served as the University's notice board. The purpose was to prepare for a learned disputation. That never took place, but in no time, thanks to the most modern communications medium, printing, they were known all over Germany and beyond.

Reformation as a revival ended in Orthodoxy, which emphasized correct doctrine and proper office over against personal faith.⁷

2 Puritanism/Pietism

I have difficulties to date the beginning of Puritanism exactly, maybe 1572, when a number of Puritan ministers wrote an "Admonition" to Parliament, may serve as a useful date.⁸ For Pietism the publication of Spener's *Pia Desideria* in 1675⁹ can be seen as the starting date. Both revival movements share the quest for conversion and for a church of true believers, be it in the Congregationalist ["separatist"] form or in the form of fellowship groups (*ecclesiola in ecclesia*). Against the opposition of Orthodoxy this revival produced the Moravian missions, supplied the Danish-Halle Mission with missionaries,¹⁰ and enabled some missionary work among the Native

⁷ Both Reformed and Lutheran Orthodoxy shared the assumption, that church office is more important than evangelism. They understood the apostles as "extraordinary officers" of the church, possessing "extraordinary gifts." Neither would they be replaced after their death nor would the extraordinary gifts continue. The command to go into all the world and make disciples was given to them *ad personam*, they fulfilled it and the command thereby ceased to exist. This view was typically expressed by the University of Wittenberg in 1652 ("Wittenbergische geistliche Ratschläge" in Werner Raupp (ed), *Mission in Quellentexten. Von der Reformation bis zur Weltmissionskonferenz 1910*, Erlangen: Verlag der Ev.-Luth. Mission/Bad Liebenzell: Verlag der Liebenzeller Mission, 1990, pp. 70-71). Anyone trying to be a missionary would be usurping the "extraordinary" office of an apostle. And that is neither humble nor has such usurpation any divine sanction.

⁸ In 1618 the Puritan Pilgrim Fathers (a term which includes the Pilgrim Mothers) sailed for New England in their quest for more religious freedom.

⁹ *Pia desideria oder herzliches Verlangen nach gottgefälliger Besserung der wahren evangelischen Kirche* (1675).

¹⁰ For a deep and detailed study of the Mission in Tranquebar see: Daniel Jeyaraj, *Inkulturation in Tranquebar. Der Beitrag der frühen Dänisch Halleschen Mission zum Werden einer indisch-einheimischen Kirche (1706-1730)*, Erlangen: Verlag der Ev.-Luth. Mission, 1996.

Americans.¹¹ This revival found its end in the mounting tide of the Enlightenment.¹²

3 The Great Awakening

When the Christian church in the west was seemingly at its lowest ebb, the Great Awakening turned the church around. Its beginning is usually dated 1734 (Jonathan Edwards) for America and 1735 for England (the evangelical conversion of George Whitefield). Charles and John Wesley¹³ and Countess Selina of Huntingdon were other important revival leaders. This revival led to the great breakthrough in world missions, dated usually 1792, when William Carey published his famous *Enquiry*,¹⁴ demolishing the Orthodox arguments against missions and proposing the mission society as "means" to fulfill the obligation of Christians to the heathen, "who are one with us in perdition and redemption." Carey inaugurated the Great Century of Missions¹⁵, which changed the religious map of much of the world. It was the mission societies, not the churches that evangelized Africa.¹⁶ In German speaking Europe 1815, the year of the founding of the Deutsche Christentumsgesellschaft in Basel, is taken as the beginning of the Great Awakening. Since the missions of the Great Awakening formed the base of the big Protestant missionary advance, I call them the classical missions.¹⁷

¹¹ Famous through the diaries of David Brainerd: J.M. Sherwood (ed), *Memoirs of Rev David Brainerd ... Based on the Life of Brainerd Prepared by Jonathan Edwards, D.D., and afterwards Revised and Enlarged by Sereno E. Dwight, D.D.*, edited by J.M. Sherwood, New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1884.

¹² The Moravians survived as both church and mission, the Danish-Halle Mission folded up.

¹³ He gave mission the preference. When asked, why he allowed women to preach, he answered: "If God owns them in the conversion of sinners, who would I be to hinder him?"

¹⁴ William Carey, *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen*, Leicester 1792.

¹⁵ Dated by Latourette 1800-1914.

¹⁶ For an excellent assessment of this read: Andrew F. Walls, "Missionary Societies and the Fortunate Subversion of the Church," *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 88:2 (1988), 141-155.

¹⁷ Like Basel, Bremen, Barmen, Berlin, Leipzig and similar missions, whose successor organizations today are the major ecumenical missions. They constitute the large majority of the member missions of the German Association of Protestant Missions and Churches (Evangelisches Missionswerk) in Hamburg. For my typology

Until the 1950s, the classical missions were in most countries the leading group of missions. Since then they share to some extent in the decline of the main line denominations.¹⁸

4 The Holiness Revival or Second Evangelical Awakening

Revivals quickly cross the Atlantic, and this one is no exception, being born in America in 1858 and in Britain in 1859. Like the other revivals it stressed conversion and the personal Christian life. In addition it had the message of a second spiritual crisis experience ("second message"), variously called holiness experience, sanctification, second conversion or entering the higher/deeper/victorious Christian life. The holiness experience provided power for service, and much of it was channeled into missions, home and foreign.¹⁹ Like the earlier revivals, it had no intention to separate the revivalists from their churches, but, as with the earlier revivals, such separations did happen here and there.²⁰ The groups of the Holiness Revival were the mainstay of support for the interdenominational faith missions. With a slow start as from 1865, these missions (together with other Evangelical missions) gained the ascendancy in Protestant missionary endeavour after a century.

Some scholars, depending on their own position in the sequence of history, conclude revival history here. But it obviously continued, even though some of us might not feel to be part of these developments.

of Protestant missions see: Klaus Fiedler, *The Story of Faith Missions*, Oxford: Regnum/Lynx, 1994, pp. 11-31.

¹⁸ It can be argued that the integration of the missions into the churches after New Delhi 1961 (and of the International Missionary Council into the World Council of Churches) was a symptom of this process of "joint decline."

¹⁹ *Clearly stated in Dana Roberts, *American Women in Mission: A Social History of their Thought and Practice*, Macon: Mercer University Press, 1996, p. 197.

²⁰ Like the Pietist Revival, the Holiness Revival produced fellowships, which united in various organizations. The revival groups born in the Pietist Revival and in the Great Awakening largely remained in the classical denominations, whereas the revival groups born of the Holiness Revival have a tendency after one or more generations to transform themselves into denominations. In Sweden and Switzerland the process is complete, in Germany it is still contested.

5 The Pentecostal Revival

When the Pentecostal Revival broke out in 1906, it was for some of the Holiness people the answer to their quest for an even deeper Christian life, while others were convinced that their (Holiness) revival had found all the truth and all true Christian experience, so that no new revival was needed anymore. The early Pentecostals had equally no interest in separation from their churches, but within a decade they were (or felt) almost all pushed out of their churches or revival movements. Already in 1907 the first Pentecostal missionaries left America,²¹ and less than a hundred years later the Pentecostals had become the largest individual Protestant denominational family. Their contribution to worldwide missions was strongest in Latin America.

6 The Charismatic Revival

As the Pentecostal Revival was born seven years before the end of the Great Century, so was the Charismatic Revival born eight years before 1968, which may mark the lowest level of Christian faith and commitment in the West in the 20th century.²² Sharing much of its theology with the Pentecostal Revival, it had a very different sociology: middle and upper class (with strong student involvement), originally white,²³ mainline and well educated.²⁴ The Charismatic Revival stayed longer within the mainline churches, so its distinct contribution to worldwide missions started more in the 1990s than in the 1960s. As all revivals do, it disturbed the context from which (or within which) people were revived.

²¹ Murray A. Dempster, Byron D. Klaus, Douglas Petersen (eds), *Called and Empowered. Global Mission in Pentecostal Perspective*, Peabody: Hendrickson, 1991.

²² Precise dates for such global developments are always problematic, here I take the date of the Student Revolution, which did not have much sympathy for such authoritarian things as faith.

²³ They were indeed white, but the crucial thing is that they belonged to the majority middle and upper class population in California, so Charismatic piety found an easy home among the (black) middle and upper class majority population in Africa.

²⁴ By contrast the Pentecostal Revival started (equally in California) at the fringe of the Christian spectrum, among the poor (especially black) and lowly educated.

And what was there before the Holiness Revival?

What I presented above is the sequence of revivals that I developed for my research into the history of the faith missions. I think that little of it was new, and that the sequence is widely accepted. It became soon very clear that the faith missions were the typical missions of the Holiness Revival. But the problem that arose was what to do with the Brethren Movement, which I had recognized as one of the three movements that prepared the ground and provided the theology for the Second Evangelical Awakening: The Holiness Movement (1835),²⁵ the Brethren Movement (1828)²⁶ and the Prophetic Movement (1813).²⁷ The Brethren Movement was very important for the faith missions, since the "faith principle" of financing the missions did not originate with them, but was taken from the Brethren. Of them, George Müller (of Bristol orphanages fame) is probably the best known exponent,²⁸ and Anthony Norris Groves the first to apply it to missionary work (Baghdad 1828).²⁹

The Christian Brethren

Since then the Brethren exerted influence on other Evangelical Christians unequal to their comparatively small number and developed a strong

²⁵ Its origin may be dated with the holiness experiences of Sarah Lankford and her sister Phoebe Palmer in 1835. This experience was based in their Wesleyan background, but soon spread into many Calvinist denominations.

²⁶ Here the initial date is taken from the Powerscourt conferences, which were instrumental in shaping the new movement.

²⁷ 1813 is the date of the publication of the first book in modern times with a premillennial eschatology (William Cuninghame, *Pre-Millennial Advent of Christ Demonstrated from the Scriptures*, 1813). It took a good number of years before these became more widely accepted.

²⁸ *George Müller, *A Narrative of some of the Lord's Dealings with George Müller* written by himself, London, ⁹1895 (¹1837).

²⁹ Anthony Norris Groves, *Journal of Mr. Anthony N. Groves, Missionary, During a Journey from London to Baghdad Through Russia, Georgia, and Persia. Also a Journal of Some Months Residence at Bagdad*, London 1831; H. Groves, *Memoir of the Late Anthony Norris Groves, Containing Extracts from His Letters and Journals, Compiled by his Widow*, London 1856. *For an academic study of the Groves see: Robert Bernard Dann, *Father of Faith Missions. The Life and Times of Anthony Norris Groves (1795-1853)*, Waynesboro/Bletchley: 2004.

missionary work.³⁰ They were clearly Evangelical, evident for example in the fact that they did not share the postmillennial eschatology that had been common to the missions of the Great Awakening, but they were born before the Holiness Revival. So I introduced a new group of missions, pitched between the classical missions and the faith missions, calling them the non-church missions. With this I had captured a major distinctive of the movement, and I could come to the conclusion that the faith missions gained some of their strength from the enduring heritage of the Brethren Movement and also some of their strength from overcoming some of the narrowness implied in some of the Brethren concepts.³¹

Another Revival, not just the Brethren

But this left something to be desired. The sequence of revivals, which I had used, covered most Protestant missions, but not all. The missions left out of it were considered often as being at the fringe of the Evangelical missionary effort, but they were there and I felt that I had to account for them, too. Denominations and missions that were left out were: Seventh-day Adventists, Churches of Christ/Christian Churches, Disciples, (New) Apostolic Churches. Quite a mixed crowd, but they had their roots all around the same time as the Brethren. An important meeting point were the Powerscourt conferences, where the Brethren were the leading spirits, promoting both their non church theology (with its call for unity) and the newly (re-)discovered premillennial eschatology. This eschatology they shared with the Irvingites, who later crystallized into the Catholic Apostolic Church.³² What they did not share with them was the Irvingite emphasis on the apostolic office and on the revival of the ("extraordinary") gifts of the NT period. But all three quests were based in one common quest: To restore the primitive church and its unity once more before the return of Christ and the end of the world.

The Brethren saw the full restoration of the NT church as impossible,³³ and they settled for the next possibility, namely representation. Thus

³⁰ The percentage of members in foreign missionary service was perhaps rivalled only by the Moravians.

³¹ Klaus Fiedler, *The Story of Faith Missions*, Oxford: Regnum, 1994, p. 25.

³² *For Edward Irving see: Margaret Oliphant, *The Life of Edward Irving*, London: Hurst and Blackett, 1862.

³³ They located the irreversible destruction of the NT church between 1 Timothy 3:15 ("You will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth") and 2

representing the NT church in its simplicity and unity, they called all Christians from the "systems" (the denominations) to join them and assemble around the Lord's Table in biblical simplicity.³⁴ In their theology of biblical simplicity they discovered that there is nothing like ordination in the New Testament, which became, in a mitigated way, a major concept of the faith missions.³⁵

The Apostolic Movement

The Irvingites did not share the rejection of ordination with the Brethren, but they shared their call for the unity of all true Christians, calling them out of their various denominations.³⁶ They also shared with the Brethren their premillennial eschatology.³⁷ Equally they shared the attempt to go back to the primitive church, but they differed in interpretation of what were the essential marks of the primitive church. The Brethren took it to be the Breaking of the Bread, while Irving saw it as the apostles' office and the apostolic gifts.³⁸ He took the coming of Christ to be soon,³⁹ and the primitive

Tim 2:20 ("In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay.")

³⁴ This did, in the beginning, necessitate in no way to leave their respective denominations, as the meetings did not take place on Sunday morning.

³⁵ Different from the Brethren, the faith missions did not deny ordination, but considered it to be of no major importance, being superseded by the "ordination of the pierced hands" which Jesus gives to all who work for him.

³⁶ The Irvingites organized themselves as the Catholic Apostolic Church in 1835, appointing, once more before the end, Twelve Apostles. Of these the last died in 1901. Different from the (Old) Apostolic Church, the New Apostolic Church understands the Apostolate as an ongoing characteristic of the church. *The (Old) Catholic Apostolic Church has almost died out, the New Apostolic Church is a worldwide communion of 11,239,935 members (2007), 78% of them in Africa (wiki: New Apostolic Church). *The current official New Apostolic Church gives 8,816,990 members in 60,343 congregations (1.1.2015). It seems that the official figure gives the full members, whereas Wikipedia seems to give the total community.

³⁷ Irving was one of the first premillennial publicists, translating (and enlarging on) the work by the Jesuit Lacunza, *The Coming of the Messiah in Glory and Majesty* (1812).

³⁸ This was a clear departure from his Presbyterian eschatology, in which apostles and prophets were seen as extraordinary officers of the church, and speaking in tongues, prophecy and miracles as extraordinary divine gifts. Everything extraordinary ceased within the first century. (Or, if John lived indeed to become a hundred years, maybe just in the early years of the second century.)

church was to be restored just once more before the end, so to say to carry it through to the coming of Christ. For this restoration they looked for the gifts like prophecy and speaking in tongues,⁴⁰ and for the church structure once more (and only once) twelve apostles were to be installed.⁴¹ This was done, and when all of them had died (1901), the Catholic Apostolic Church resigned to the development, waiting for Christ's return and dwindling away,⁴² while the New Apostolic Church decided that apostles were a mark of the primitive church, and therefore a permanent institution (not just once before the end).⁴³ The New Apostolic Church has grown markedly over the generations and has spread all over the world.⁴⁴

The Prophetic Movement

The Prophetic Movement, reinterpreting Scripture and the signs of the times in the premillennial way, captured virtually all of Evangelical Christianity in the 19th century. The earlier revival and mission leaders like Jonathan Edwards and William Carey continued to be honoured, but Evangelicals no longer shared their postmillennial eschatology.⁴⁵ In America

³⁹ Though he never fixed a date, he expected it to take place in his own lifetime.

⁴⁰ They began to be experienced in his Presbyterian congregation in London from 1820 onwards.

⁴¹ As with Jesus' disciples, who represented the twelve tribes of Israel, but did not come from all the twelve tribes, the Irvingite apostles represented all of world Christianity but came all from Britain.

⁴² For a good overview of the history up to 1901 (at that time about 1000 congregations with about 200,000 members), see: R.-F. Edel, "Katholisch-Apostolische Gemeinde" in *Evangelisches Lexikon für Theologie und Gemeinde* (ed. Helmut Burkhardt and Uwe Swarat), Wuppertal/Zürich, R. Brockhaus, 1993, vol. 2, pp. 1056f.

⁴³ Long after the first disappointment in Irving's generation, a new attempt was made to make the apostolate ultimate by J.G. Bischoff (chief apostle) predicting the return of Christ during his life time. He grew very old, and when he died, the New Apostolic Church declared that God had changed his mind on the date of Christ's return. And who should stop God from doing that? A number of smaller churches split from the New Apostolic Church, mainly through conflicts over the definition of the apostolic office and its powers. For a critical overview see: O. Eggenberger, "Neuapostolische Gemeinde" in *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 3rd edition.

⁴⁴ *The New Apostolic Church has now nearly 9 million members in over 60,000 congregations.

⁴⁵ In biographies very little emphasis was put on their eschatology, though it was very important for the honoured heroes as a missionary motivation.

one of its expressions was the Millerite Movement. It had, like all revival movements, a strong evangelistic emphasis, and its second message was the soon return of Christ. Its message was to call out from all the Christian denominations those that were ready to prepare for the imminent return of Christ. The concern was the unity of the church in the end time, not expressed by joining a new denomination (just one more like so many others), but by joining the remnant, those ready for the Lord's coming, irrespective of their denominational affiliation.

The Adventist Movement

The Millerite movement left the main stream of the Prophetic Movement when Miller calculated the date of the second coming of Christ. When Christ neither returned in spring nor in autumn 1844, the great disappointment scattered the Millerites. Several Adventist groups remained, but only one of those that started small in the course of time became important: the Seventh-day Adventists.⁴⁶ That they turned worldwide was made possible by a change in their missiology, from calling the remnant to prepare for the Second Coming to spreading the Gospel all over the world.⁴⁷ The Seventh-day Adventist Church shares with the New Apostolic Church the idea of a strong central and worldwide organization, while Brethren and Churches of Christ deny any use for such a thing.⁴⁸

The Churches of Christ/Christian Churches

The three movements that are linked to Powerscourt were not the first to attempt to restore the primitive church. The same idea to get back to the New Testament was already common around 1800. Part of this vision was, as with the Brethren, the call to unity by coming out of the multitude of denominations. That vision also shows in their no-name strategy. Brethren was one choice, Church was another. Those became the Churches of Christ, or sometimes the Christian Churches. The Churches of Christ did not only

⁴⁶ They formed themselves into a church in 1863 with about 6500 members, and currently have about 12 million members worldwide, strongest in Africa. *For 2014 the official SDA website counts 78,810 churches, 69,213 companies with 18,479,257. More than a million baptisms were counted within a year.

⁴⁷ Stefan Hörschle, *From the End of the World to the Ends of the Earth. The Development of Seventh-day Adventist Missiology*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2003.

⁴⁸ Both positions are equally based on the concept of a return to the New Testament.

call all to unity by giving up their unbiblical separations (denominations), they also recognized that in the NT there was no overall structure (let alone a centralized one) beyond the local church. The early leader was Barton W Stone. They never became a large denominational family, but still spread all over the world.⁴⁹

The Disciples of Christ

Similar, and for a period united with them, were the Disciples of Christ, who started in the early years of the 19th century in America. Their first leader was Thomas Campbell, a Presbyterian minister like John Irving. Like the Brethren Campbell felt the sorry state of divided Christianity, and he, too, saw a non-church movement as the required answer. He started the Christian Association of Washington (another no-name organization) in 1907 and issued his "Declaration and Address" in 1809, calling for a unity based on Scripture alone with no secondary sources of authority like confessions of faith. This, of necessity, brought him into conflict with his own Presbyterian Church, which he left. Two years later a first church was founded at Bush Run in Pennsylvania, which turned the non-denominational unity movement into another denomination.⁵⁰

A revival or what?

The movements discussed so far fill indeed a gap between two major revivals or maybe they are the filling between the two parts of a sandwich. But are these disparate movements a revival? I think they do qualify, all together, as a revival. They all shared the primary revival message of conversion. In addition they had a second message, as appropriate for revivals. The groups also showed the deep and heartfelt attitude of searching for new/old truth, typical for any revival.

⁴⁹ For a thorough study of the history see: Earl Irwin West, *The Search for the Ancient Order: A History of the Restoration Movement 1866-1906*, Delight: Gospel Light, 1950. *In Malawi the Churches of Christ are strongly represented, with maybe 250,000 members.

⁵⁰ For an exhaustive coverage of the different branches of Churches of Christ, Disciples etc, see: Douglas Foster, Paul Blowers, Anthony Dunnivant and Newell Williams (eds), *The Encyclopedia of the Stone-Campbell Movement*, Grand Rapids/Cambridge, Eerdmans, 2004.

One Revival?

Extreme diversity

If all the movements described so far belong to one revival, then they are pretty diverse. Churches of Christ are extremely congregationalistic, while the Seventh-day Adventist Church is probably the most centrally organized Protestant church. The Brethren and many others would hardly see eye to eye with the New Apostolic Church, and neither would New Apostolic Christians seek any fellowship with the Seventh-day Adventists or with any other church. While several of the movements called for unity and considered themselves as union movements, they differed widely on what this union implied, so much that their claims were mutually exclusive.

A common second message

The results of the revival are extremely diverse, but they can all be traced back to a common second message. This message consists of two parts, and different movements differ in their emphasis:

- (1) Restore the Primitive Church
- (2) Once more before the end.

The earliest movements (Churches of Christ/Christian Churches and Disciples) emphasized the return to the NT church, without at that time yet embracing the premillennial eschatology.⁵¹ The Brethren put equal emphasis on restoration of the primitive church as on the preparation for Christ's return. The same applies for the apostolic movement, though it had a fundamentally different concept of the primitive church. While the Brethren saw no office, ordained or otherwise, in the New Testament, the Apostolic Movement found there a highly structured and hierarchical office, and while the Irvingites could not imagine a restored church without the restoration of the original spiritual gifts, the Brethren never felt that they were missing.⁵²

⁵¹ If one discounts the books by Lacunza, the first premillennial book known to me was published only in 1813. But the Prophetic Movement was received even in these groups, in the Churches of Christ maybe by a quarter of the churches.

⁵² The Brethren seem never to have questioned the cessationist theology that relegates both the apostolic office and the apostolic gifts to the first century. Revivals question several received truths, not necessarily all of them.

The Prophetic Movement emphasized the end, the second coming of Christ. In doing that it called the diverse Christian churches back to the biblical roots, if not in the issue of church structures, then in the understanding of salvation history. Restore the prophetic teaching of the New Testament church, and prepare the church once and for all before the end for the coming of Christ. This means that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is also a Restorationist movement.

The common ground of all these diverse movements is the idea of restoration. Therefore I propose to name this revival the Restorationist Revival.

The Restorationist Revival's peculiarities

With all the other revivals, the Restorationist Revival emphasized conversion. But it differed in its second message. The revivals before and after the Restorationist Revival are famous for not having produced many new denominations, whereas the Restorationist Revival is famous for just that. The reason is in its second message: restoration of the primitive church. Though the revivalists had no intention to split the church or to start a new one—indeed they only wanted to *unite* the churches—their interest in the NT structure of the church had to collide immediately with any church that had a defined structure (and all churches need to have such a structure). If a group of revivalists embraced only the prophetic interpretation of salvation history, it could probably remain within the original churches, but as soon as the restorationist message is embraced, the clash was programmed.

The high propensity to splits

The restorationist churches display a strong tendency to splits. These do not occur, as otherwise is often the case, out of new revivals,⁵³ but through attempts to define the original second message further.

All groups shared the common quest to restore the NT church. This was the first and major cause, not only for splitting from the existing churches, but to start with different concepts. The problem was based in the (unrecognized) fact that the NT does not present any clear church

⁵³ David Barrett, *Schism and Renewal in Africa. An Analysis of Six Thousand Contemporary Religious Movements*, Oxford University Press, 1968, shows the close relation between revival and splits. This makes it impossible to see all splits as negative occurrences.

structures.⁵⁴ While all the elements are there, there exists no key on how to puzzle them all together. When the Evangelical Alliance was started in 1856, it was understood that there were very clear convictions that could be gained from the NT on salvation.⁵⁵ But church structure (including sacraments and ministry) were issues on which serious Christians, basing their judgment on Scripture, could come to different conclusions. The Restorationists did not share this conviction. Each group constructed its own picture of the primitive church and its order, and since there are no clear patterns of church order in the NT, these reconstructions differed immensely. Thereby a common quest produced very different results.

The high propensity to splits in the churches coming from the Restorationist Revival is based on the concept that the NT can yield a clear picture on how the primitive church was and on how it could be restored.

Among the Churches of Christ a major split occurred on the use of musical instruments in church services. If one leaves out the book of Revelation,⁵⁶ no musical instruments can be found to accompany the singing of the assembled church. While all accepted that, the conclusions were opposed: The Churches of Christ (Non-Instrumental) felt obliged to conclude that if there were no guitars in the NT, there can be no guitars today, while the Churches of Christ (Instrumental) concluded that, if there is nothing said against guitars or banjos in the NT, that is sufficient reason to allow their use in the current (restored) church.

The Brethren early in their history split between an exclusive and an open branch (1848). While both, technically, assumed that the NT church could not be restored any more, but only be represented, the exclusive Brethren insisted that a very clear cut pattern for such assemblies⁵⁷ could be derived from the NT, and also that clear principles on how to relate to

⁵⁴ A convincing presentation of this fact, using current theological methods and terminology, is Eduard Schweizer, *Gemeindeordnung im Neuen Testament*, Zürich: Zwingli Verlag, 1959, which starts with the opening sentence: "There is no such a thing as *the* New Testament church order."

⁵⁵ Laid down in the "Base" of the Evangelical Alliance. None of them addresses issues like sacraments, ministry, or church structure.

⁵⁶ I still remember that my teacher of Practical Theology at Hamburg Baptist/Brethren Seminary, Hans Rockel, argued that the picture of the heavenly worship in the book of Revelation may well reflect worship patterns in the NT church on earth.

⁵⁷ Another non-church term.

those that did not see the full truth, could be derived from Scripture.⁵⁸ The Open Brethren, while living faithfully what they understood to be involved in representing the NT church, did not claim exclusive truth for themselves, and were therefore able to invest largely in foreign missions, both in their own structure,⁵⁹ and in many interdenominational missions, societies and causes.⁶⁰ The exclusive Brethren invested little in missions,⁶¹ experienced seven major splits,⁶² and over time markedly declined. Though they never admitted to be a church, their quest for the true church had taken the revival spirit away.⁶³

The Millerite movement, though not strictly organized, disintegrated after the Great Disappointment into several Adventist groups, none of which flourished much, except the Seventh-day Adventists. These, being centrally organized, were not very prone to splits, though over the decades some split offs have taken place, most of them in attempts to get back to the original Adventist message, like the Adventist Reform Movement. Adventism also gave birth to a very small and very extreme group, the Branch Davidians, of which another small and very extreme group became infamous in the Waco shoot out.⁶⁴

⁵⁸ These included the differentiation between those believers in Christ, who (unfortunately) did not really know the truth (they could be admitted as guests to participate in the breaking of the bread), and those who knew the truth and disregarded it (and therefore the Open Brethren could not participate in breaking the bread, even as guests).

⁵⁹ The Open Brethren in the UK see every missionary as an individual, commissioned by her or his local assembly.

⁶⁰ Since they knew no ordination and had few full time pastors, given the high level of dedication of their members, the Brethren could spend a lot of money on missions, foreign and home.

⁶¹ The German exclusive Brethren are different in this aspect, since they, through the Missionshaus Bibelschule Wiedenest (*now Forum Wiedenest), have one of the strongest foreign mission contributions in Germany. This was made possible by a process which attracted the exclusive Brethren in Germany to the Bible School (1905 in Berlin, 1919 in Wiedenest) started by the Open Brethren. Since then, the majority of the Exclusive Brethren assemblies in Germany have taken on Open Brethren characteristics.

⁶² Major splits can be dated 1879, 1884, 1885, 1890 and 1908 (F. Roy Coad, *A History of the Brethren Movement*, Exeter: Paternoster, 1968, pp. 209f).

⁶³ Even after the Reformation faith cemented in orthodoxy.

⁶⁴ The internet provides much information on this extreme group.

The Apostolic Movement of Irving was centrally organized. Its most essential split occurred in 1860, when, after 26 years of service, already six of the originally twelve apostles had died. When the decision was made not to appoint replacement apostles, the [Old] Catholic Apostolic Church began its sustained decline, and the New Apostolic Church its sustained rise.

Extreme tendencies

Splits and split offs⁶⁵ can occur in any Christian denominational family, but among the different denominational families, the Restorationists have a high frequency. I argue that it is the second message of the Restorationist Revival which provides for this tendency. The second message demands a restoration of the primitive church, based on the NT, and since that very NT does not present a clear picture of primitive church order, it must be achieved through interpretation, and these interpretations of necessity must differ among themselves.

Such interpretations may not only be contested between the different members of the restorationist family, but also within each group. Here the frequency of splits depends on the level of preciseness each group demands of its interpretation of the NT. The Exclusive Brethren split over this preciseness several times, while the Open Brethren avoided this. And it is the groups with the most "precise" interpretation that give birth to the most extreme interpretations. So it is no wonder that the most extreme Taylor Brethren arose from the exclusive branch of the Brethren Movement, not from its open branch.

The tendency to high preciseness, if applied to the prophetic message, the other "platform" of the Restorationist Revival, may bring an even higher level of extremism. The Millerite movement, a "general" movement emphasizing the restoration of the church once more before the end, became extreme, when the date of Christ's coming was calculated with *preciseness*. The group that in 1863 formed the Seventh-day Adventist Church accepted the lesson and, while equally awaiting the soon return of the Lord, refused to be precise in its definition of the times. But other groups continued to assume the need for preciseness, and while using the same methods of ascertaining the truth, insisted that this time they would

⁶⁵ I take a split as involving major groups, whereas a split off implies small numbers separating from the large denomination. Often a split off is instigated in order to regain the original vision that a movement of reform has lost, like with the two Free Methodist break-aways.

get it right. This led some groups to give further precise calculations of the date of Christ's return, with the Jehovah's Witnesses (1914) being prominent. Equally precise, though not fixed to a date but a life, was the decision of the New Apostolic Church that Christ's return was to take place while the Chief Apostle Gottfried Bischoff was still alive.⁶⁶ In doing this the New Apostolic Church, by that time more than a century old, took up the original Irvingite vision of restoring the church once more (and only once) before the end.

The extreme preciseness goes usually along with exclusiveness, which leads to sectarian tendencies, which, if taken to the extreme, deny to others not only the "truth of facts" but also the "truth of faith." All revivals major on the fact that it is not the correct faith that makes for salvation, but the living faith, not the belief that certain doctrines are true, but the faith that Christ saves, and that it is worth to commit one's life to Him.⁶⁷ While the central revival message addresses this truth of faith, it is the revival's second message that can be seen as addressing the "truth of facts." As long as this second message is seen as "live" interpretation of the central truth of Christ's salvation, fellowship with others with different "live" interpretations is very possible, and the more the second message takes centre place, the more is unity of faith impossible. The group that went to the furthest extreme in this way are the Jehovah's Witnesses.

Children unacknowledged and siblings unrecognized

By now it should be clear that Evangelicals, including those who have no direct links to the groups described so far, have many theological links to the Restorationist Revival.⁶⁸ But who exactly belongs to that Revival? And how Evangelical has it remained? I propose to take first a historical approach and then a contemporary approach.

The Restorationist Revival was, conditioned by its second message, prone to differing and extreme interpretations. This explains how contradicting groups like the Seventh-day Adventists and the Churches of

⁶⁶ Gottfried Bischoff, born 1871 declared authoritatively in 1951: "I am the last; no one will come after me. That is God's decision, it has been decided, and the Lord will confirm it." He died in 1960 (www.ekd.de/ezw/Publikationen_2284.php) (Michael Utsch).

⁶⁷ The Restorationist call for unity of all true believers is based in this conviction.

⁶⁸ This applies both to the continuing evangelical quest for the living/real church and their quest to be prepared for the Day when the Lord comes back.

Christ could come from the same revival, and this also makes room to accommodate the extremists, like the Taylor Brethren and the New Apostolic Church who have fellowship with no other group of Christians.

This historical view makes even room for the Jehovah's Witnesses. Though the claim that they are a split off from the Seventh-day Adventists cannot be sustained, it cannot be denied that their distant origin is in the Millerite Movement. Their emphasis is the soon return of Christ, and their interpretation of biblical prophecy has been all along so precise, that they had to regularly revise dates and seasons as they went along.⁶⁹ Their interpretation of the NT church (in their language the "theocratic organization") became so precise that anyone who does not share it is excluded from salvation.⁷⁰

I know that in any family children of the same parents can develop into very different directions, and when grown up, a child may well deny the original values of the family. Therefore as an Evangelical historian I am quite willing to admit that I have some more siblings than I am proud of.

If so, are the Jehovah's Witnesses just another Evangelical group? If I use a historical approach, I have to admit that. If I use a contemporary approach, they are not, and neither is the New Apostolic Church. Yes, they have their Restorationist Revival roots (and are clearly related to its second message), but a claim to be Evangelical cannot be made for them as they have left the first message of the Revival, that it is faith in Christ that saves, and derived from that, that even those who do not share the "second message" still share the faith that saves.⁷¹ This central revival tenet is clearly

⁶⁹ I am in no way a specialist on the study of the Jehovah's Witnesses. But I suspect that the Watchtower Movement, originally being not a denomination, but a society to promote prophetic truth, in the beginning did not look so different from overall Restorationist evangelicalism. The case of Joseph Booth, who moved freely between Baptists, Churches of Christ, Seventh Day Baptists, Seventh-day Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses and again Seventh Day Baptists supports this view.

⁷⁰ Even here there may be a late reflection of the original Restorationist call for unity: Brethren, Churches of Christ, Disciples and Seventh-day Adventists all called the true believers *out* of the systems that ensnared them. The Jehovah's Witnesses went further by denying the "truth of faith" to those who did/do not come out.

⁷¹ At a time when many revivalists saw the Pope (or more frequently the Papacy) as the Antichrist, they were nevertheless willing to agree that there are individual true believers in an otherwise evil system. One such individual was Madame Guyon, often in deep trouble with her church, but always remaining her faithful daughter. She influenced Evangelicals a lot, but Evangelical recognition of Catholic

denied by the Jehovah's Witnesses, and therefore they can no longer be regarded as Evangelicals (notwithstanding their Evangelical pre-history). The situation is similar with the New Apostolic Church. The fact that the church seeks no contact with other believers, and thus denies the fundamental evangelical revival tenet, excludes it from the wide movement of Evangelicals.⁷²

Using the contemporary approach, the situation of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is dissimilar. In spite of some sectarian behaviour and tendencies, the Seventh-day Adventists right from the beginning never made an exclusive claim for their second message, nor for their denomination. In the early generations they nevertheless kept much apart, while in the last decades the evangelical aspects received an increasing emphasis.

What about the Anglo-Catholics?

The Restorationist Revival, born in the early decades of the 19th century, went through defining experiences in the 1830s and 1840s. At the same time the Anglican Church experienced a renewal movement, the Anglo-Catholic Movement, starting from Oxford.⁷³ Its founding date is usually

(true) believers was not restricted to the difficult type. *This position was expressed by Charles Spurgeon, the leading preacher of the Holiness Revival, with these words: "We hear a great deal about the unity of the Church, and notions upon this subject are rather wild. We are to have the Roman and the Greek and the Anglican Church all joined together in one: if they were so, much evil would come out of it. God has, I doubt not, a chosen people amongst all these great corporations, but the union of such questionable organizations would be a dire omen of mischief to the world: the dark ages, and a worse Popedom than ever, would soon be upon us" (Spurgeon preaching from John 10:16 on March 25, 1883, quoted in: Iain Murray, *The Forgotten Spurgeon*, London/Carlisle: Banner of Truth, 1973 (1966), p. 133f.

⁷² The situation of the New Apostolic Church may differ somewhat, as in principle they acknowledge that salvation is not restricted to their membership. If their second message would be toned down to some extent and fellowship be sought with other believers in Christ, they might return to the Evangelical movement. *In 2013 I was told by a visitor that such steps are clearly being taken in Germany.

⁷³ Sometimes called the Oxford Movement or the Tractarians (who published the "Tracts for the Times"). *The first tract was "Thought on the Ministerial Commission," written by John Henry Newman, 1833. Altogether 90 such Tracts were published. For quick information see: Wikipedia: Tracts for the Times; anglicanhistory.org/tracts/ (All 90 Tracts can be found there).

identified as 1833, a few years after the Powerscourt conferences, defining events for both the Brethren and the Irvingites.

The central aim of the Anglo-Catholic Movement was to call the church back to its beginnings, when it was Catholic and Apostolic, and to counteract decline and apostasy.⁷⁴ The emphasis was on the office of bishop⁷⁵ and on all that was understood to be apostolic. But the Movement was not just a new departure in church politics, but a movement that deepened the spiritual life of many, through prayer, reintroduction of the sacrament of penance, of monastic life, and the celebration of the liturgy. Its main concern was the church in its essence.

There seem to be a number of elements that connect the Anglo Catholics to the Restorationist Revival. While the Restorationist Revival tried to restore the primitive church, the Anglo Catholics tried to restore the Catholic church, which they understood to be the original and real church. And this seems to me basically the same quest, which they share with Brethren and Churches of Christ, though with very different presuppositions. Other connections lay in the concept of apostolicity. While the Irvingites decided to appoint apostles once more, the Anglo Catholics put all emphasis on apostolic succession and teaching.⁷⁶ While I can find many similarities in terms of restoring the primitive church, I cannot find them in terms of eschatology. The typical signs of revival are there: The call to a personal commitment of faith, a strong emphasis on the dedicated Christian life, the translation of faith into social action and missions,⁷⁷ so I do not hesitate to call the Anglo-Catholic Movement a Revival. Since there seem to be no direct influences from the Protestant Restorationist Revival, I would provisionally like to ascribe its emergence to the (revival) spirit of the time, which sought a return to the primitive church. If the Anglo-Catholics

⁷⁴ The initial statement was Keble's sermon in Oxford: "On National Apostasy" (1833), published and by Mowbray (London), 24 pp.

⁷⁵ This had the effect that for the missionary work in Malawi, Charles Frederick Mackenzie was consecrated bishop ever before any of the missionaries set foot into the territory he was consecrated for. *For the UMCA history and its impact on Malawi see: James Tengatenga, *The UMCA in Malawi. A History of the Anglican Church 1861-2010*, Zomba: Kachere, 2010.

⁷⁶ It may also not be a coincidence that the Old Apostolic Church has the official name: Catholic Apostolic Church.

⁷⁷ The mission society of the Revival was the Universities Mission to Central Africa, 1861, now part of the United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

are another member of the Restorationist Revival Family, it becomes even more diverse.⁷⁸

A Restorationist Revival in Pommerania

*After I wrote this chapter, I discovered another Restorationist Movement, which has a minimal presence now, but which has had its great days. The Restorationist Revival in Pommerania was introduced to me by the PhD research of one of the students at the Evangelical Theological Faculty in Leuven.⁷⁹

A revival worth taking note of

I agree that the Restorationists are a very diverse and mixed family, but I also see that they *are* a family. And while some of the original revival fervour may have gone,⁸⁰ it is a revival family. Revival was and is never a smooth thing, the renewal routinely has rough edges. In regular life these may not be so easy to handle, but historians should be able to accommodate them. I am convinced that the recognition of the Restorationist Revival will make it easier to interpret the early history of the Evangelical Movement.

⁷⁸ That this may be true is supported by the fact that these days in the Anglican Church there is a considerable coalescence between Evangelical and Anglo-Catholic interests in the face of perceived liberalism.

⁷⁹ *Gottfried Sommer, Die "Belowianer" in Hinterpommern. Ihr Weg vom enthusiastischen Aufbruch zur Bildung einer Freikirche, PhD, Evangelical Theological Faculty, Leuven, 2010.

⁸⁰ That is a fact with every revival, though.

17 The Charismatic and Pentecostal Movements in Malawi in Cultural Perspective¹ (1999)

Malawi, as any other country, has a strong cultural dynamic, and in Malawi, as in many other African countries, this dynamic has a strong religious aspect. Church news, bad or good, easily make banner headlines in the national newspapers. From the literature one may gain the impression that Malawi basically has two or three denominations, which in one way or the other interact with the political and social forces. This picture implies a rather static ecclesiastical situation, ignoring strong dynamic developments in the religious sector, which is characterized by a steady and growing trend towards religious diversification.

The most obviously dynamic developments these days take place in the Charismatic sector of Christianity, but it is also fascinating to see that some of the Evangelical churches, which started long ago and grew slowly over decades, are now experiencing strong growth. Since most people in Malawi are either Christians or Muslims, such growth, to a considerable extent, implies transfers of allegiance from one church to another. Such transfers are one evidence of a religious dynamic, which, of necessity, includes a cultural dynamic.

These dynamics do not take place in national isolation, but are connected to developments in the wider world. This connection is sometimes seen as a causative factor, a claim easy to make and difficult to prove, but no doubt worthwhile to discuss.

The issues

I am aware that the current process of religious change in Malawi is wider than my topic, but I am convinced that the two movements—Charismatic and Pentecostal—are good subjects for a study of the religious aspects of current cultural dynamics. The Charismatic Movement is the most dynamic religious development in Malawi, and the Pentecostal Movement, linked to

¹ First presented as: The Charismatic and Pentecostal Movements in Malawi in Cultural Perspective (Theology Conference: Christian Engagement with African Cultural Dynamics (19-20 June 1998), Department of Theology and Religious Studies, Chancellor College, University of Malawi), then published as: Klaus Fiedler, "The Charismatic and Pentecostal Movements in Malawi in Cultural Perspective," *Religion in Malawi*, no. 9, 1999, pp. 28-38.

the Charismatic Movement by much common theology, is a representative of an earlier Evangelical movement, which has been developing rapidly over the last years.

The issues I want to investigate are:

1. What is the importance of the two movements in the current religious scene in Malawi?
2. Which are the prominent religious dynamics?
3. What are the cultural dynamics in this process?
4. Are the two movements basically extensions of foreign movements or are they basically Malawian movements?
5. What is the relationship of both movements to what is loosely called the "African Independent" or "African Instituted Churches"?

In connection with this I want to discuss how appropriate sociological interpretations of these movements are² and present the case for giving religious phenomena first of all a religious interpretation.

Background: My understanding of revival history

I share the famous mission historian's Kenneth Scott Latourette's interpretative key that the Holy Spirit moves forward church history by ever new revivals, which bring about ever new organizations.³ The Revivals, which often are an almost worldwide phenomenon, representing a quest for Christian renewal, are powerful tools of religious, social and cultural change.

For this chapter four worldwide revivals are important:⁴

1. *The Great Awakening* (1734). This gave birth to the modern Protestant missionary movement in 1792, which produced the classical missions, which in 1861 started the evangelization of Malawi (UMCA: Anglican; Livingstonia Mission and Blantyre Mission: Free Church of

² Here my partner in discussion is: Rijk A. van Dijk, *A Room with A View. Puritan Young Preachers and their Room for Manoeuvre in Post-Independence Urban Malawi*, PhD, Utrecht, nd.

³ Kenneth Scott Latourette, *History of the Expansion of Christianity*, 7 vols, Grand Rapids: Zondervan 1970 [1937]. - Latourette draws attention mainly to missions and charitable and specialized Christian organizations. But obviously revivals also create many new denominations.

⁴ For more detailed discussion of these see: Klaus Fiedler, *The Story of the Faith Missions*, Oxford: Regnum; Sutherland: Albatross, 1994, pp. 1-31.

Scotland and Church of Scotland, and Nkhoma Mission: Reformed). About a generation later the revival touched the Roman Catholic Church, bringing about a major upsurge in foreign missions (in Malawi: White Fathers/Sisters; Montfortians/Daughters of Wisdom).

2. *The Holiness Revival* (1859), often called the (Second) Evangelical Awakening, gave birth first to the interdenominational faith missions, later also to denominational Evangelical missions. A special strength of the Holiness Revival was the creation of ever new interdenominational, specialized agencies. The Holiness Revival differed from the Great Awakening especially in its ecclesiology and in its eschatology.⁵

3. *The Pentecostal Revival* (1907). Originating in the Azusa Street Revival of 1907 in Los Angeles, it is indebted to African spirituality.⁶ Over the decades the Pentecostal Movement has moved from the fringes of the church spectrum to become the largest Protestant denominational family.

4. *The Charismatic Revival* (1960) can be seen as a response to the wave of secularization that characterized the late 1950s and the 1960s ("the spirit of 1968," student revolution). It started as a renewal movement in the large mainline churches in America, deeply involving Catholic and Orthodox churches as much as Protestant, and only after some time developed an "independent" branch. In spite of much shared theology, the Pentecostal and Charismatic Revivals differ strongly in terms of origin, history, social context and spiritual appeal.

These revivals all wanted to bring nothing but the original gospel message, and therefore they differ in so many things. However, they have many common features, four of which I consider as important for this essay:⁷

1. Revivals represent a quest for a deeper Christian life, for a faith that is tangible and visible.

2. Revivals thrive on a new reading of the old biblical message, with a claim to go back to the roots, and this produces an increase in Christian reality.

⁵ Its ecclesiology was more individualistic, its eschatology was premillennial.

⁶ Allan H. Anderson, *Bazalwane. African Pentecostals in South Africa*, Pretoria 1991. See also: Moya: *The Holy Spirit in an African Context*, Pretoria, 1991.

⁷ *For a more detailed discussion see: Klaus Fiedler, *Missions as the Theology of the Church. An Argument from Malawi*, Mzuzu: Mzuni Press, 2015.

3. Revivals present an implicit (and often explicit) criticism of existing Christianity.

4. Revivals have no intention to split the church, but to revive it. However, a revival often produces new denominations, either as a new organization, as a further development of a fellowship or ministry, or as a split from an existing denomination.

The Pentecostal Movement in Malawi: Historical Aspects

In studying religious movements, historical connections are important, since they yield a lot on the character of a movement. But they can also be deceptive, because in many ways the origin of and the foreign input into a religious movement are less important than its acceptance by the people in Malawi or in any other area. This acceptance is a creative process, which to a large extent dominates church history.

In this process, the influence from the Great Awakening has been the most important for Malawi. It brought the oldest (Anglican) and the two biggest churches (Roman Catholic; Church of Central Africa Presbyterian) to Malawi. These classical (mainline) denominations now represent about 60% of Malawian Christianity,⁸ and mainline Christianity was and—to a large extent still is—a major social force (esp. through the school system) and the preferred religious partner of the government.

The Holiness Revival brought to Malawi the first Evangelical denominations,⁹ which now comprise up to 20% of Christianity in Malawi.¹⁰ More important for this essay is the strong emphasis of the Holiness Revival on the creation of interdenominational specialized Christian agencies, like

⁸ With numbers growing and percentages declining.

⁹ The first Evangelical denominations were Zambezi Evangelical Church (1892) and Africa Evangelical Church (1893/1900).

¹⁰ To reach this figure, Evangelical denominations coming from other revivals than the Holiness Movement must be included, like the Seventh-day Adventist Church, which comes from the Restorationist Revival (1828), which is not treated in any detail in this essay. For all these churches together I often use the term "post-classical churches." Out of the 20% perhaps one quarter may have a direct origin in the Holiness Revival.

Scripture Union, Christian students' organizations¹¹ and evangelistic agencies.

The Pentecostal Revival came to Malawi late, after it had lost much of its "blackness." Very soon after its inception, the Pentecostal Revival reached South Africa where it was accepted by the Zion Churches (Christian Catholic Apostolic Church) related to Zion, Illinois, and then spread rapidly into the black South African population, thus creating the Zionist Movement, which came to be seen as the typical paradigm for African Instituted Churches.¹² The historical relationships cannot be overlooked, still it would be less than scholarly not to see the Zionist Movement as a genuine indigenous religious movement. The Zionist churches reached Malawi via South Africa in 1923,¹³ but they were not conscious of their affinity to the Pentecostal churches which reached Malawi by the same route.

The two biggest Pentecostal churches both came to Malawi through the initiative of Malawians who had gone to work abroad, a phenomenon common to many churches in Malawi.¹⁴ Missionaries followed only after the churches had been established as what the then government called "native controlled missions."

¹¹ *For a recent study see: Boston Khonje, *A Historical Study of the Establishment and Contribution of the Student Christian Organization of Malawi (SCOM) to the Malawian Society (1961-2012)*, MA, Mzuzu University, 2014

¹² Bengt Sundkler, *Bantu Prophets in South Africa*, London: OUP for the International African Institute, 1961. *See Ulf Strohbehn, *The Zionist Churches in Malawi: History – Theology – Anthropology*, PhD, University of Malawi, 2010 for more details from a Malawian perspective. To be published by Mzuni Press (2015).

¹³ J.C. Chakanza, *An Annotated List of Independent Churches in Malawi 1900-1981*, Sources for the Study of Religion in Malawi (Zomba), no. 10 (1983). *Ulf Strohbehn, *The Zionist Churches in Malawi: History – Theology – Anthropology*, PhD, University of Malawi, 2010.

¹⁴ Examples from South Africa are the African Methodist Episcopal Church (Hannock Msokera Phiri, 1924) and the Zionist Churches, and through Zimbabwe, the Free Methodist Church (Amos Phiri). There is also a strong contribution from *atchona* to the Baptist Convention of Malawi: Stephen Galatiya, Cape Town; Henry Nyekanyeka and Donald Kaduya, Harare. *Hany Longwe, *Christians by Grace – Baptists by Choice. A History of the Baptist Convention of Malawi*, Mzuzu: Mzuni Press, 2011. (Kaduya: pp. 42-44, 51, 55, 63, 77; Nyekanyeka: p. 31; Galatiya, see Index p. 524).

The Apostolic Faith Mission

The Apostolic Faith Mission is the original denomination going back to the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles, led by the black holiness preacher Seymour. Compared to the Assemblies of God, the Apostolic Faith Mission has remained small worldwide.

The founding date in Malawi is 1933, when Robert Chinguo returned from working in the mines in South Africa. There he was converted and joined the Apostolic Faith Mission. He established the first congregation in the Zomba area near Jali.¹⁵ He seems not to have been the only *mutchona* to join the AFM in either South Africa or Zimbabwe. The AFM in Malawi seems to have had other origins as well, among them a church in Mzimba. These origins also had *mutchona* connections, all of which were somehow brought into contact with each other through missionaries resident in South Africa. These missionaries would also visit the congregations in Malawi.¹⁶ Missionaries who are remembered for this kind of travelling were G.S. Erasmus¹⁷ and Cooksey. At the same time in Cape Town there existed an AFM congregation, pastored by Moses Banda, in which Nyanja was spoken.¹⁸ Moses Banda at some point moved back to Malawi.

The first AFM missionary to settle in Malawi (Blantyre) was Eduard Wendland from the German Velbert Mission. He found eight AFM churches in the country,¹⁹ with two full pastors (Moses Banda and Jim Phiri). Wendland settled in town, and continued as the travelling missionary.²⁰ He was a carpenter by training and loved to build churches, which also seems

¹⁵ The name of that first congregation is possibly Mahame.

¹⁶ Inf. Ulf Strohbehn, Principal of the AFM Bible College in Blantyre.

¹⁷ He wanted to settle in Malawi 1965/66, but did not do so because he fell ill with black water fever and malaria. He is still highly venerated today. "He spoke and preached in eight languages."

¹⁸ This seems to have been one of the languages, not the only one. A similar congregation, established by "Nyasas," is the PIM congregation in Soweto, which even today has a Nyanja speaking pastor, and an occasional bible reading in that language (Patrick Makondesa, "African Baptist Assembly in South Africa (Providence Industrial Mission," forum paper, postgraduate colloquium 1998). *I observed the same when I attended church there.

¹⁹ Velbert Mission is the earliest German Pentecostal mission.

²⁰ Seven or so in the South, and one in Mzimba. - In 1979 Bongartz came from the Velbert Mission in Germany and took over the care for the Central and Northern Regions. He found two congregations, one of them in Mzimba.

to have had a supporting effect on the spiritual ministry of the churches. His coming meant more growth for the AMF in Malawi, but it also meant the loss of some control by the Malawian leaders of the church, Wendland being the National Chairman.²¹ This seems to have created no major conflicts at that time.²²

Were the AFM churches in Malawi African Instituted Churches? Taking the traditional sociological definition that an AIC is defined by the absence of a mission connection, then the AFM was not an AIC. But this definition is conveniently set aside when the foreign mission was a black mission, like the African Methodist Episcopal Church of America or the American National Baptist Convention, Inc. (with John Chilembwe and Emma DeLaney as the first missionaries). But why only with black missions? They are *azungu* just like the Whites. If the racial aspect is disregarded, the AFM in Malawi would very much qualify as an African Instituted Church, though maybe not as an African Independent Church. It was started solely on African initiative, brought here from South Africa, and was led by Africans for 30 years.

Another argument to call the AFM an African church is its style of worship. The traditional Pentecostal liturgy is very simple and flexible, leaving much room for participation and initiative by the congregation. This would tally with Hollenweger's argument that the most important contribution of Pentecostalism to the Christian church was not its new theology of the Holy Spirit, but its new and open style of worship. The argument can be strengthened by Anderson's emphasis that the whole Pentecostal Movement is based on a spirituality, deeply Christian, but also deeply African.²³ This should be accessible to African congregations even when their first contact to Pentecostalism was mediated through white missions.

The other great asset of the Apostolic Faith Mission was its emphasis on healing, and that met, mediated by Europeans or not, a very deep African need, since Traditional Religion is to quite some extent centred on sickness and healing. Even today after every service there is prayer for healing, and though not every prayer is successful in medical terms, there are cures, and

²¹ In 1994 he was replaced by David Nyamisinga.

²² Such conflicts erupted early when the first missionary came to the Seventh Day Baptist churches and also with the Churches of Christ.

²³ Allan Anderson, *Bazalwane. African Pentecostals in South Africa*, Pretoria 1991.

it makes for a lot of attraction when people are healed dramatically, as was the case in Mzimba congregation in its early years.²⁴

The strongest area of growth of the AFM in Malawi is the Lower Shire. Work there was begun in 1970 by Jim Phiri, who was called there by *atchona* who had been to Zimbabwe. Therefore to brand the AFM in Lower Shire as a Zimbabwean import would be wrong, since it is not the historical connection which decides, but the local reception. People in Lower Shire made the AFM so much their own that by 1999 there were about a hundred congregations, half of the whole strength of the AFM in Malawi.

Schoffeleers pointed out in the 1960 that cults of affliction ("spirit possession cults") were a very prominent feature of life in the Lower Shire,²⁵ but in the 1970s found that they had receded a great deal.²⁶ His argument that there is a relationship between these two facts convinces me. One possible interpretation would be that the AFM simply carried on with what was current in Traditional Religion, but I prefer the claim that many people saw the AFM way of seeking healing as a better and more successful way of dealing with some (or many?) illnesses. But even this obvious connection must be kept in perspective: In the Lower Shire even Evangelical churches flourish, which do not stress healing, like Baptists²⁷ and Seventh-day Adventists.

²⁴ In Mzimba a young man and a young woman, Chekha Kumwenda and Kankhwale Banda, who "were more dead than alive," were prayed for and healed dramatically. That attracted many people to the congregation. The two were at the time of research for this essay still members of Rumphi Apostolic Faith Mission Church (Int Ulf Strohhahn).

²⁵ See Matthew Schoffeleers, *Religion and the Dramatization of Life: Spirit Beliefs and Spirit Possession in Central and Southern Malawi*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1997, pp. 98-151. This includes the articles: "Social Functional Aspects of Spirit Possession in the Lower Shire Valley" (98-113), "Evil Spirits (Afiti) and Rites of Exorcism in the Lower Shire Valley" (114-138), "A Collection of Chikwangwali Songs" (139-142), "Case History of Aliya Nyatakaya" (143-151). Though the book was published in 1997, the research for it was done in the 1960s.

²⁶ Mathew Schoffeleers, *Pentecostalism and Neo-Traditionalism: The Religious Polarization of a Rural District in Southern Malawi*, Amsterdam: Free University Press, 1985, 51 pp.

²⁷ Nsomo Baptist Church in the Ngabu Association became the centre, with Jim Kalenga being a major leader (Hany Longwe, *Christians by Grace – Baptists by Choice. A History of the Baptist Convention of Malawi*, Mzuzu: Mzuni Press, 2011, pp. 120, 163-169, 402, 409-410, 466f.

Authors have frequently explained the rise of Pentecostalism in terms of (rapid) socio-economic change. There is a little strength in the argument, since there is always some socio-economic change everywhere. But beyond that, the case of the AFM in Malawi lends little support to the argument. The churches were started by *atchona*, and therefore the historical connection can be counted in favour of the socio-economic change interpretation. But the early churches were mostly started in poor rural areas (like Jali), not much affected by either urbanization or plantation economy. The strongest growth was in the Lower Shire, again an area not known for its rapid socio-economic change.

The Assemblies of God

The Assemblies of God's origin is similar to that of the AFM. One group of *atchona* went northwards and found contact with a Swiss Assemblies of God missionary, Daepf, living on his mission station on Igale Pass, halfway between Tukuyu and Rungwe, and annoying the Moravian and Lutheran missionaries in the area by not respecting their comity agreements.²⁸ Returning migrants brought the Pentecostal message to Malawi and established in 1934 a "native controlled mission" in the Misuku Hills (Mubulu).²⁹

Returning migrants from South Africa established the Assemblies of God in the South, with Lyton Kalambule being the major leader.³⁰ He came from the Zambezi Mission³¹ and while working in Durban was converted and joined the Full Gospel Church there. A missionary there, Fredrik Henry Burke (USA), changed to Assemblies of God, and extended his work to Malawi.³² In 1934 Eliot Nkunya established the Assemblies of God in the

²⁸ *See Klaus Fiedler, *Missionary Cultural Conservatism: Attempts to Reach an Integration between African Culture and Christianity in German Protestant Missionary Work in Tanzania 1900-1940*, PhD, Dar-es-Salaam University, 1977.

²⁹ Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism. An Introduction*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 61.

³⁰ Warren Newberry (ed), *Assemblies of God 1947-1972*, Limbe: Assemblies of God in Malawi, 1972, p. 5.

³¹ Now Zambezi Evangelical Church.

³² The reason may have been a conflict over the issue if taking of medicine should be permitted. If this is correct, Burke's move reflects a move from a more extreme to a more established form of Pentecostalism.

Dedza area (Gilbert Village), where later a major centre developed with the Seminary then situated there.³³

After the establishment of Assemblies of God in Malawi, missionaries from both Tanzania and South Africa took care to visit and to give some guidance. After some time the first missionary settled.

The same pattern of European missionary involvement developed in both denominations. There would be no traditional mission stations with church, dispensary and school. The missionaries would settle in town, visit the churches and establish a training institution such as the Assemblies of God Seminary in Dedza³⁴ and the Apostolic Faith Mission Bible School in Blantyre.

The result of this policy was to keep the educational standards of the Pentecostal churches low. This was probably not a conscious negative decision, but a decision to concentrate on the "spiritual" side of the work, leaving "secular" concerns to the secular agencies. This disregard for education did not completely stop Pentecostals from acquiring education. Many had received an education before they joined their Pentecostal church, and as usual, parental piety often translates into good education for children. This has improved the general level of education in Pentecostal churches, and today, for example in the urban AFM congregations in Blantyre and Lilongwe, there are some well educated members, and on a Sunday one might see a few cars in front of an AFM church.

For the Assemblies of God also the argument of socio-economic change seems to be weak. The Misuku Hills are not exactly a place to expect "rapid social change." But the Assemblies of God also show evidence of strong African initiative. The missionaries were not the initiators, nor was their position very strong.

³³ *For a full history of the Assemblies of God see: Enson Lwesya, Mvula, and Gregory Chawanangwa, *Flames of Fire: A History of the Assemblies of God in Malawi*, Limbe: Assemblies of God Literature Centre, 2005.

³⁴ It was established originally in 1949 in Limbe. Gideon Bomba who was at Witbank in South Africa at the time, came to help with the work at the school. Bomba was elected as the first African General Superintendent at a conference in Lilongwe in 1962 (Warren Newberry, *Assemblies of God 1947-1972*, Limbe: Assemblies of God in Malawi, 1972, pp. 6f). In 1992 the seminary was moved to Lilongwe. *For his role in the Blantyre Revival see: Bright Kawamba, *The Blantyre Spiritual Awakening 1969-1986: an Antecedent of the Charismatic Movement in Malawi*, MA, University of Malawi, 2013.

A question still requiring an answer is how strong the African cultural elements were in the two churches. It seems that there were very few conscious attempts at inculturation, though the structures of Pentecostal churches with much local independence and leadership allow for a good amount of "unofficial" inculturation. One very conscious attempt at inculturation was (most probably) instigated by Assemblies of God missionaries, namely to accept polygamists for baptism (though not allowing them to enter a polygamous marriage after baptism). This policy decision was objected to by Magnus Udd, the oldest of the AoG missionaries, who for that reason left the AoG and started the Independent Assemblies of God.³⁵

Numbers

Any interpretation of the history of the Pentecostal Movement must take into account the numbers. Several Pentecostal churches were started in the 1930s, and overall they did not grow much. Religious statistics are quite doubtful in Malawi, but Barrett's statistics, reflecting the situation in the 1960s, seem to give a good indication. The total of Pentecostals was this:

Denomination	Origin	Congregations	Full Members	Total Community
Assemblies of God	1930	77	3,621	10,000
Pentecostal Holiness Association	1932	14	769	2,000
Apostolic Faith Mission	1933	8	700	1,500
Apostolic Church of Pentecost	1947	157	2,000	4,000
Independent Assemblies of God	1958	25	1,000	3,000
Full Gospel Church of God	1970	8	1267	2000

³⁵ Rev Magnus Udd came to Malawi in 1946 and was still living in Blantyre in 1999. The Independent Assemblies of God seemed not to be growing fast, and he was looking for a mission to take over the work from him. - In the Rungwe area north of the Lake an Independent Assemblies of God church was started by a Tanzanian for the very same reason.

United Apostolic Faith Church			2,000	4,000
Total		289	11,357	26,500
Average per congregation			39.3	97.7

These statistics, which give the Pentecostals a credible 1,2% of the total Christian community in Malawi, show their limited importance at that time and reflect that their missionary work was done without great investment. After the 1960s the missionary input was increased, but not sufficiently to explain the major growth of Pentecostal churches which took place. The Assemblies of God aim to reach 500,000 members soon. Quite probably a hopeful overestimate,³⁶ this figure nevertheless represents real growth and real aspirations. The Apostolic Faith Mission has grown from the eight congregations recorded by Barrett to about 200 now with 8-12,000 full members and a total Christian community of 25,000. In addition new Pentecostal churches are thriving, like Apostolic Faith Church,³⁷ the Four Square Gospel Church with a big church on Chileka Road in Blantyre, the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada with maybe 300 congregations etc.³⁸ In addition a number of African Instituted Churches should be added here, but I do not have the information.³⁹

It is difficult to reach firm conclusions on the basis of less than firm statistics, but it is obvious that the Pentecostal churches, after generally slow or extremely slow beginnings, have, since 1970, expanded considerably and are continuing to do so. This development is paralleled by accelerated growth in other Evangelical churches, with the Seventh-day

³⁶ A somewhat conservative estimate counts 600 congregations, which may reflect a total community of 80,000.

³⁷ This may be the oldest Pentecostal church, going back to the pre Azusa revival in Wales of 1904.

³⁸ This church is the Canadian equivalent of the US American Assemblies of God, but they are organizationally separate.

³⁹ In Hilary Mijoga's collection of 299 sermons from African Instituted Churches, three of the churches involved would belong to this type: First Faith Pentecostal Church, New Bethlehem Pentecostal Church and United Pentecostal Church. There is also a New Jerusalem Pentecostal Church. These names are just random, and there should be many more, but the numbers of members seem not to be high. See Hilary Mijoga, *Separate but Same Gospel: Preaching in African Instituted Churches In Southern Malawi*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2000.

Adventist Church being the most prominent. But even the Free Methodist Church has been growing consistently by almost 15% over the last 20 years⁴⁰ The Baptist Convention of Malawi, of which there was one congregation in Malawi in 1961, now has about 600 congregations and maybe 40,000 members.⁴¹

This statistical evidence describes a major process of religious diversification that is currently going on in Malawi. The fact that Pentecostals and Seventh-day Adventists, otherwise quite different, are growing almost equally fast, invalidates the argument that a certain doctrine or practice may be the cause of such a growth. Perhaps an explanation could be that over the last decades Malawian society diversified and that religious diversification reflects this social diversification.⁴² This ongoing process of religious diversification is common to almost all African countries (and beyond), and it is composed of many smaller processes.

A parallel process worldwide is the widespread decline of the mainline (classical) churches. This process does not show clearly in Malawi yet, as, due to high population growth and high religious activity, almost all churches are growing numerically. But if a church grows by 2% a year, this means, assuming a population growth of 3,6%, a decline of about 1,5% a year.⁴³ So it can be argued that Malawi takes part in a worldwide process of religious change, which is defined by (1) growing religious diversification and (2) a gradual move away from the more "established" denominations (3) a move towards churches which are more easily adaptable to new cultural situations and which reflect social patterns which allow for greater

⁴⁰ Henry Church, "The Impact of Theological Education upon Church Growth in the Free Methodist Church in Malawi," PhD University of Malawi, 1999. *Published as: Henry Church, *Theological Education that Makes a Difference*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2002.

⁴¹ The number of congregations (plus 200 preaching points) is quite reliable, since a full list exists, but judging on that basis 80,000 full members (estimated by the Baptist Mission, not the Convention) seems to be an overestimate.

⁴² This argument may hold true even in view of the fact that the one-party totalitarian government tried to stem social diversification. First, Banda was not as successful as he believed to be, and, perhaps more importantly, in spite of severe persecution of some religious groups (the most prominent being the Jehovah's Witnesses), religion was less controlled than any other aspect of Malawian society.

⁴³ I have no figures for Malawi, but for the Catholic Church in Zambia a 2% annual growth is recorded, with the population growing by 3,3%.

participation of all and (4) churches which provide for a greater level of commitment and identification.

The Charismatic Movement in Malawi

The Charismatic Movement is a worldwide revival whose origin is usually traced to California in 1960 (David Bennett).⁴⁴ It spread worldwide, touching the most diverse denominations. This spread was not effected by a corps of "missionaries" spreading the message and establishing a worldwide organization. No worldwide organization exists. The Charismatic Movement could possibly be described as a loose "network," connecting very diverse elements, but having certain core tenets and values in common. In such a loose network the decisive issue is not who spreads the message, but who accepts it ("connects to the network").

The Charismatic Movement shares with the Pentecostal Movement much of its theology, but its history and sociology are vastly different. While the Pentecostal Movement started at the fringes of Christianity,⁴⁵ the Charismatic Movement started right in the centre of the classical mainline churches.⁴⁶ While the Pentecostal Movement started within the poor, lower class of California, the Charismatic Movement started within the middle and upper classes of California. Whereas the Pentecostal Movement was started predominantly by black Americans, the Charismatic Movement was started by white Americans.⁴⁷ Both movements spread rapidly in America and worldwide, and both had no intentional policy of separation from the existing churches. However, the Pentecostal Movement separated quickly, since it was more of a fringe phenomenon and many churches were then stricter in enforcing uniformity than they are today. In addition the rejection by the previous revival was different. The Holiness Movement, which had given birth to the Pentecostal Revival, largely (and quickly)

⁴⁴ For a personal account see: Dennis J. Bennet, *Nine O'clock in the Morning*, Eastbourne: Kingsway, 1978 (1970 Logos).

⁴⁵ Fringe is here defined as seen from the majority churches, the main-line churches.

⁴⁶ Dennis Bennet was an Anglican priest, and the Charismatic Movement quickly spread to such mainline denominations as Lutherans, Catholics and Orthodox.

⁴⁷ *This is not a matter of race, but of social strata. The Charismatic Movements in California flourished among the (predominantly white) middle and upper class in California, and it flourishes equally in the (predominantly black) middle and upper class in Africa.

rejected it, whereas the Pentecostal Revival later saw the Charismatic Revival as a movement akin in spirit.

All of these differences have validity worldwide, and seem to apply to Malawi as well.

The Charismatic Movement in Malawi: Historical Aspects

The 1970s were a time of Revival in Malawi.⁴⁸ It can be seen as coming after the period around independence, where much of people's energy, love and fascination had been absorbed by the political developments.⁴⁹ It can also be seen as part of the worldwide reaction against the "liberal" spirit of the 1960s.

The fires of this revival were fuelled by some of the interdenominational para-church movements, which came from the Holiness Revival tradition. These were groups like Scripture Union, Students' Christian Organization, and, especially, New Life for All.⁵⁰ These movements, neither Pentecostal nor Charismatic originally, provided a breeding ground for the new Movement, and, just as it happened in Nigeria, they opened up to some extent, to the new message.⁵¹

This meant that some of the 1970s revival "went Charismatic." In addition there was also some Charismatic input from abroad, spearheaded by Rev Barbara Tippet and her Blantyre Christian Centre (1980), which is

⁴⁸ *For a description and interpretation of the Blantyre Revival see: Bright Kawamba, *The Blantyre Spiritual Awakening 1969 to 1986: an Antecedent of the Charismatic Movement in Malawi*, MA, University of Malawi, 2013.

⁴⁹ The nationalist struggle was often couched in Christian terms, see the last chapters in Masauko Chipembere, *Hero of the Nation. Chipembere of Malawi: An Autobiography* (edited and introduced by Robert I. Rotberg), Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2001.

⁵⁰ * Bright Kawamba, *The Blantyre Spiritual Awakening 1969 to 1986: an Antecedent of the Charismatic Movement in Malawi*, MA, University of Malawi, 2013; Khetwayo Banda, *Word Alive Ministries International (WAMI) and its Wholistic Mission*, MA, Mzuzu University, 2012.

⁵¹ *The same happened in DRC Congo: Kibutu Ngimbi, *Les Nouvelles Églises Indépendantes Africaines (NAIC). Un phénomène ecclésial observé au Congo/Kinshasa et auprès de ses extensions en Europe occidentale*, PhD, Evangelical Theological Faculty Leuven, 2000.

most probably the first organized Charismatic entity in Malawi.⁵² From that time onwards new Charismatic churches were started in quick succession, like:⁵³

Name	Started	Founder/leader
Blantyre Christian Centre	1980	Rev Barbara Tippet
Agape	Feb 1982	Pastor Mgala
Faith of God	1984	Pastor Mgala
Living Waters	Jan 1985	Pastor Ndovi ⁵⁴
Glad Tidings	Jan 1986	Group initiated
All for Jesus	Jan 1993	Pastor Zalimba
Flames of Victory	Sep 1993	Pastor Katchire
Calvary Family Church	March 1994	Pastor Mbewe
Vineyard	Nov 1994	Pastor Gama

Currently the number of Charismatic churches in Blantyre alone is well above 30. No statistics exist to my knowledge, but 5000 full members and a total community of 20,000 may be a fair guess.⁵⁵ The Charismatic churches have a tendency to expand to other places, though this does not apply to Blantyre Christian Centre.⁵⁶ The most prominent of the Charismatic Churches is Living Waters.

⁵² It has its roots in the Rhema Movement. *For the full history see: Khetwayo Banda, Word Alive Ministries International (WAMI) and its Wholistic Mission, MA, Mzuzu University, 2012.

⁵³ These churches were not started from Blantyre Christian Centre, and there seem to have been no strong direct influences.

⁵⁴ At the time of starting Living Waters, Ndovi was the top Malawian leader of the AFM. This move gave him much better opportunities to develop his leadership potential. *For the history of one Living Waters congregation see: Blessings Mtinti, History of Kakule Living Waters Church, Lilongwe, BA, Mzuzu University, 2011.

⁵⁵ For the calculation see: Klaus Fiedler, "Even in the Church the Exercise of Power is Accountable to God," in Kenneth R. Ross (ed), *God, People and Power in Malawi. Democratization in Theological Perspective*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1996, p. 217.

⁵⁶ *This has changed, it is now a countrywide church: Word Alive. See Khetwayo Banda, Word Alive Ministries International (WAMI) and its Wholistic Mission, MA, Mzuzu University, 2012.

Charismatic steps to a new church

These churches were not started by agents from abroad, nor were they splits from existing churches or *atchona* foundations. They developed a pattern of their own, and though the story of each church is somewhat different, a typical "Charismatic" pattern emerges.⁵⁷ In order to understand the pattern, the starting point must be the realization that the Charismatic Movement, as a revival, has no inbuilt intention to start new denominations. Though the steps ultimately lead to a new church, any individual or group may never reach that final stage, remaining happily Charismatic on a "lower" level. It must also be kept in mind that the succession of steps is not compulsory, and that all levels are still realities today.

The interdenominational stage

To Malawi the Charismatic Movement came mainly through interdenominational para-church organizations.⁵⁸ In many ways they provided the teaching ground for the new theology and the new experiences. Of these early movements, New Life for All has lost much of its importance, but the Charismatic element is strong in SCOM and Scripture Union. But the movements have not turned themselves into clearly defined Charismatic groups, and often there is a struggle between the new (Charismatic) and the old (Evangelical) tendencies.

The fellowship stage

The next stage is often to form fellowships. These can be prayer meetings, house meetings, cell groups, evangelistic teams etc. The names vary; they usually meet on a weekday evening, trying not to clash with other church functions. These fellowships have a definite Charismatic character, are intentionally interdenominational (though in fact the large majority may come from one denomination or even from one congregation) and are usually loosely organized. The members of these fellowships are often the most active members of their congregations, having no intention to be anything other than that. Though their dedication, contribution and

⁵⁷ This pattern has close parallels in Nigeria.

⁵⁸ I have defined para-church organizations as specialized Christian agencies, which have no intention to start new denominations or to become one, but which nevertheless have a tendency to claim the primary spiritual allegiance of their members. In this last aspect they differ from other Christian specialized agencies like the Bible society.

leadership are highly valued, these are often paired with uneasiness over the new style and sometimes frictions come into the open. Obviously the fellowships with their new message (though they claim it is just the old one), do present a challenge to any congregation, which has to be weighed against the possibility of enrichment.

This fellowship stage is usually strong within the mainline churches, in the case of Blantyre within the CCAP, and though fellowship movements have a tendency to consolidate themselves into denominations over two to three generations,⁵⁹ there is no inherent necessity for that.⁶⁰

Ministries

The first step in the direction of a clearly independent Charismatic organization is the formation of a ministry. These are usually formed around strong individuals, who have a call to a specialized or personalized ministry. In such a ministry the leader is extremely important, and around him or her a small group of people forms a nucleus. They can be termed proper members of the ministry, and in public they often function as the "helpers" of the leader. Around that comparatively small nucleus is a larger group of participants, who make use of the services offered through the ministry according to their needs and predilection. Though the ministry may have a very strong spiritual identity, it does not claim to be a church, and there are no activities on Sunday morning, so that everyone can go to their usual church.

Charismatic Churches

At one stage or another a ministry or fellowship group *may* start to meet on Sunday morning. This makes it a church, even if the interdenominational or nondenominational fiction is kept up for some time.⁶¹ Another sign that a

⁵⁹ This happened in Sweden with fellowship movements from the Holiness Revival: Helgelseförbundet, Misjonsförbundet, Örebro Missionsförening.

⁶⁰ A case where such a fellowship stage became a permanent institution is the East African Revival. Only rarely did fellowships develop into independent churches. That it happened among the Luo of Kenya can be explained by the fact that to start independent churches was almost the regular thing in that area. In areas where there was no strong inherent tendency to independentism (like Uganda and Bukoba), only very few groups chose that way, and none of them became important.

⁶¹ A historical precedent for such an unintentionally deceptive attitude is the Brethren Movement, which wanted to represent the unity of all believers beyond

ministry has become a church is its own administration of the sacraments. But sacraments seem not to play such an important role as baptism is far less important than conversion and Holy Spirit baptism. In assessing the stages in a church's development one should also observe when and how weddings become sacramental.

A church split or split off

This stage is rare, since the Charismatic Revival is not denominationally fixed. In Malawi no (major) split has yet occurred. Quite a number of people have moved out of their denominations, but a split would mean that an existing denomination is divided into a "Charismatic" and a "non-charismatic" denomination. The Charismatic Movement has remained within the Catholic Church, within the Anglican Church,⁶² and within the CCAP.

It is within the CCAP that tension was highest. In the conflict St Columba Parish, where in the 1970s Charismatic influences had first gained ground, played a major role. The conflicts were couched in Presbyterian terminology, like the issue of the minister refusing to ordain elders,⁶³ or the young people not obeying the kirk session. This terminology avoids addressing the real problem, namely of how Charismatic in style and theology a Presbyterian church can be. One possible solution, which leaves the existing structures unchallenged, is to follow the traditional rules for the official church functions and to give a lot of leeway for various fellowships. This seems to have been a pattern adopted in quite a number of congregations, but it will stop to function when one or both sides feel that conflict is inevitable.

This was the case when the Synod administrators decided to deal thoroughly with the "Born Again" issue by presenting the Born Again faction in Blantyre Synod with a clear choice: Conform or withdraw. The Born Again group rejected what seemed to be an alternative, claiming their right to be Presbyterians and nothing but that. Recently things went further, and a

denominational allegiance by coming together to break bread in biblical simplicity. Though some of their meetings still today claim to be no churches (a "non-church movement"), they effectively behaved like a church from the day they had started to break bread on a Sunday morning.

⁶² Especially in the Diocese of Lake Malawi where the Bishop, Peter Njanya, was part of it.

⁶³ "Because some are wolves in sheep skins."

split-off developed. The data available to me does not allow for a definite interpretation. From what I have read I would define the new church as a split-off, meaning a comparatively small group leaving the original church, and start a church of similar character, but with much enhanced Charismatic opportunities. The name differs fundamentally from the usual names of the Charismatic churches. They have names which do not directly indicate the denominational family they belong to,⁶⁴ and they do not make territorial claims. Pentecostal churches normally indicate their denominational family in their name,⁶⁵ and mainline churches usually also indicate their territorial claim in the name.⁶⁶ The newly founded Charismatic church, by its name "Presbyterian Church of Malawi," identifies itself clearly as a competing church, making the same claim as to denomination and almost the same claim as to territory. It is therefore a new departure in the Charismatic Movement here in Malawi, and if one takes a clue from other countries,⁶⁷ it has a future, but is not expected to become a serious numerical challenge to the church it split from.⁶⁸ I understand that the new church is not the church of the Presbyterian Charismatics, but that only a

⁶⁴ By consciously not indicating the denominational family, they do indicate it in a way, since the names, which are so different, nevertheless somehow form a pattern which often makes it easy to recognize a Charismatic church right away by its name.

⁶⁵ Most frequent terms used for this are "Pentecostal" and "Apostolic." The Assemblies of God, as an exception, by choosing a biblical name, followed a naming pattern more common in the Restorationist Revival (Church of God, Churches of Christ, Brethren etc).

⁶⁶ Some mainline churches give all prominence to the territorial claim, like Church of England, Church of Scotland, Church of Central Africa Presbyterian.

⁶⁷ In other countries Charismatic version of mainline churches exist, but are not very frequent. In Germany there is one Lutheran Charismatic church (Evangelische St Anskar Kirche), it made a big splash in the Christian media when it was started by Wolfram Kopfermann, the leading figure within the Lutheran Charismatic movement in Germany, but it attracted only a small percentage of the Charismatics in the Lutheran and United churches in Germany. A Charismatic split (or split-off) took place in Ghana. - The mainline Charismatic churches can be seen as a half way house, which invites travellers to go either direction (mainline or independent Charismatic), but not to settle there happily.

⁶⁸ Therefore I prefer to use here the term "split-off," reserving the term "split" for a major disruption that rends the church apart, like the Scottish disruption of 1843, which went 2:1 (Church of Scotland, Free Church of Scotland).

smaller group has started it and that the majority of CCAP Charismatics are not likely to join it.

What is happening?

It is obvious that the Charismatic Movement, though its numbers are not yet very big, has become a major new religious factor in Malawi, and one that is unlikely to go away in the near future. In the final section of this paper I want to try some interpretation, and in so doing compare it with the Pentecostal Movement.

Non-religious interpretations

Scholars of various ideological background have advanced sociological, economic and political explanations to explain (or explain away?) new religious phenomena. A frequent model is the deprivation model. When a group in society is economically disadvantaged, it turns to a new religious movement. This argument often looks convincing, since in countries where the majority is economically disadvantaged, every new religious movement will have a good number of disadvantaged people joining it. However, an explanation is often not attempted as to why so many equally disadvantaged people do *not* join it.

Rijk van Dijk in his study of the "Born Again network" tends to see it as a youth phenomenon, and aligns, compares and to some extent identifies it with other "youth movements" like those of Kamwana or Muchape⁶⁹ He had to deal with the problem that many of the "Young Preachers" have now grown older, so he created the category of the "older young preachers." He argues that the young preachers through their "Puritanism" created in a society that was plagued by controls on all levels a "room for manoeuvre." While this is not to be doubted, it seems to me an insufficient explanation for the rise of the Born Again phenomenon in Malawi.⁷⁰

Another frequent explanation is the "postcolonial" explanation. The Charismatic Movement in Africa is the work of Western, right-wing,

⁶⁹ Kamwana grew old and remained the leader of his movement, and during the most recent Muchape (after van Dijk wrote) he was well above seventy. *See Joseph DeGabriele, Chisupe. Old Peppers don't Bite, PhD Module, University of Malawi, 1997.

⁷⁰ If heightened control was the cause, then, after 1994, it should have declined.

capitalist or neocolonialist forces⁷¹ encroaching on unsuspecting Africa. Or, it is Africans who do not know better, willingly choosing what is not good for them. Both explanations are the religious equivalent of the dependency theory, whereby the real and perceived ills of post-colonial African societies are seen as caused by post-colonial forces from the metropolises who organize their dependent bridgeheads (usually the local elite, especially the economic elite) in the countries which formerly they controlled directly, but now, more efficiently, rule by remote control. This argument, in economics now somewhat dated, denies African responsibility for both good and bad. If Paul Gifford sees the Charismatic Movement in Southern Africa as a feature of international Right Wing Christianity,⁷² this seems to tell me more about the author than about the Charismatic Movement here, which, if anything, is a very local phenomenon.

Religious interpretation

All these explanations have one thing in common: They do not take religion as genuine, only as an expression of something else, of something real. I argue that a religious phenomenon should first be seen and interpreted as such, and only after that, non-religious aspects should be considered.

I see the Charismatic Movement as an expression of the perennial quest for a deeper Christian life, which goes beyond attending the *makalasi*, fulfilling the rules, going to church, behaving oneself and be properly married and buried. I am not claiming that this is the message that the "pre-Charismatic" churches proclaim, but this is how a good number of people understand or live their message, and some people at some point in their lives stop being content with that.

Over the centuries this search for the deeper Christian life has taken recourse to the Bible, especially the New Testament, in its quest for renewal. This quest, enriched by a good dose from the contemporary *zeitgeist*, then comes up with new discoveries from the old book, expounding powerfully the old message in a new way. This is the revival situation. It is a situation of renewal and trouble for the existing church(es). Their theology is being challenged ("you have not been reading the bible properly"), their practice is questioned ("our church is cold and half dead"),

⁷¹ Extra spice is added to this by finding (inventing) connections to the CIA, the American secret service.

⁷² Paul Gifford, *The New Crusaders: Christianity and the New Right in Southern Africa*, London: Pluto, 1991.

their cultural stance is attacked ("you have become worldly"), and many people's claim that they are Christians is flatly denied. Not being only (or even mainly) negative, revival offers a new level of religious experience and commitment, a new lease of life for stagnating Christian organizations, a new vision and love renewed. The choices are not easy, since the new message is usually couched in less than balanced terms, and often cultural practices (like shouting Hallelujah or raising hands) are closely related and often seen as an inseparable part of the message of renewal.

Church history seems to show that the church(es) do not only need gentle renewal, but also revival in the way described so far, full of vigour and with plenty of rough edges. Didn't even the Catholic Church in the end profit from the Protestant Reformation?⁷³ Therefore I interpret the Charismatic Revival in Malawi as a necessary, though not always pleasant movement for the church. The Charismatic churches will not replace the mainline, evangelical or independent churches, but they will enrich the Christian spectrum and thereby adapt it to fit better into changing social situations.

This interpretation holds water even for the Pentecostal Movement, though less for Malawi, since the Pentecostal Movement came here not so much as a renewal movement to the existing churches, but as an alternative way of being the church. But even so it provided (and increasingly provides) a challenge to other churches.⁷⁴

Cultural and sociological aspects

Even if my claim that a religious phenomenon should be interpreted first of all as such, is accepted, it must not be overlooked that every religious phenomenon has a cultural and a sociological side. Some of these I want to point out.

Urban and middle class

While the Pentecostal Movement has its mainstay in the rural peasantry and reaches the middle class usually through the effects of pious family life

⁷³ This makes the term "Catholic Reformation" seem more appropriate than the term "Counterreformation." The Catholic Church was reformed through the Protestant Reformation, without in turn becoming Protestant.

⁷⁴ A friend of mine, after being influenced by SCOM, left his evangelical "birth church" (Zambezi Evangelical Church) because it was not lively enough and joined the Assemblies of God.

on the education of the children, the Charismatic Movement in Malawi was born in the city, and is much more of a middle class phenomenon. This is supported by the observation that much of their teaching reflects the "prosperity gospel" ('Jesus was not poor, so claim prosperity in faith').⁷⁵ But this is a message which fits well in an urban, upward-moving middle class context and is ill suited to situations of perennial rural poverty. I have not found clear data, but it seems that, though many Charismatic churches have some rural work,⁷⁶ they do not really thrive there.⁷⁷ This is very different with the Pentecostal churches, and it may also show in the fact that many Charismatic "campaigns" in areas like Lower Shire fascinate the people and leave little lasting results.

Deeply African

The Charismatic Movement's Western connections must not be denied.⁷⁸ Literature from America is being used, evangelists are invited for crusades,⁷⁹ worldwide fellowship is sought. But all this is more on the surface. What makes the movement African is that it is seen by so many Africans as meeting genuine needs. Three concerns are strongly answered: The quests

⁷⁵ This is sometimes expressed in the slogan: "Name it, claim it!" (in faith).

⁷⁶ I heard that Living Waters has 500 rural churches, 460 of them in Mozambique. That leaves 40 for Malawi. On such issues real detailed research is necessary, because statistical claims are often unreliable. *By 2014 this figure had changed drastically.

⁷⁷ A symbol of such rural struggling may be the Living Waters church on the left side of the M1 beyond Ntcheu, with the name written in big capital letters over a building which does not look like having any intention of surviving the next rainy season. *The church indeed did not last, but Living Waters has now spread widely in Ntcheu Rural. See: Lloyd Jalazi, *A History of Living Waters Church in Ntcheu District*, BA, Mzuzu University, 2013.

⁷⁸ Foreign Charismatic influences in Malawi come in addition from Nigeria. Unfortunately Matthew Ojo, a Nigerian Baptist, was denied a visa to Malawi when he wanted to come to research the Nigerian Charismatic connection.

⁷⁹ One example is the recent Ernest Anglesey Crusade in Blantyre and Lilongwe, but it is quite probable that the results of this and similar crusades were not only much lower than the organizers claim, but were low even in objective terms. If true, this would be a picture similar to "crusades" in other countries and by other denominations. *For a case study, where everyone was greatly blessed but no church saw any increase, see: D. Schott, *Evangelism by Fire - Eine kritische Untersuchung der Evangelisationsarbeit von Reinhard Bonnke in Afrika*, PhD, UNISA, 2003.

for health, power and wealth, concerns which already feature prominently in African Traditional Religion. I understand that the Charismatic Movement gives new Christian answers to these deep African (and human) concerns. Though the Charismatic message was not devised in Africa, it became an answer to genuine African needs.⁸⁰

The Pentecostal churches in Malawi as elsewhere, emphasized the healing message of the gospel. In terms of power it emphasized power over sin and power against evil forces. Wealth was not a major part of the message. Still, the rapid development, for example, of the Apostolic Faith Mission in the Lower Shire can only be explained if Africans saw it as something deeply relevant to them.

African in culture?

In academic discourse a narrow definition of African culture is often used: Either it is everything that has its roots in the pre-colonial past (then African culture is diminishing by the day), or everything "the missionaries" (who exactly?) disliked, like polygamy, witchcraft, traditional dancing, herbal medicine and initiation. In the same discourse it is then often argued that the missionaries would have been much more successful (were they not successful, anyhow?) if they had adapted better to African culture. In this line of thinking, Charismatics are less African. They don't like bark-cloth, wear suits and happily drive cars, they denounce witchcraft as sin and denounce polygamy and medicines activated with *zitumwa*. In their meetings there is a lot of shouting and bodily movement, but they neither revived traditional praise songs nor cultivate traditional dances.

I propose another definition of "African": African is what is relevant for Africans. If African is what is related to the African past, the Charismatic Movement in Malawi is not very African, but if African is that which is *relevant* to Africans, the Charismatic Movement in Malawi is definitely African, since for a certain group of Malawians it is highly relevant (irrespective of where certain forms and tenets may have originated from).

This argument of relevancy can be applied to the Pentecostal churches as well. Though not of much relevance to the urban middle class, it was and is highly relevant for many people in the poor and rural areas of Malawi.

⁸⁰ In this line of interpretation I follow Matthew Ojo, who has shown this clearly in his research on the Charismatic Movement in Nigeria.

African Independent?

In missiological literature much has been made of the "African Independent Churches." Often they were made to present the "real African face" of Christianity, showing even the mainline churches the way to go, which way is often seen as a compromise with African culture and occasionally even African Traditional Religion. Some uneasiness developed over the term "African Independent Churches," so it was replaced by the term "African Instituted Churches." If "African Instituted" is taken to mean that in the church originally there were no *azungu*⁸¹ nor a clear mission connection, then most of the Charismatic churches are clearly African Instituted and African Independent.

This brings up new missiological discussions. If the Charismatic churches are AICs, many of the generalizations made about them are not true any more. This maybe a good development, since far too many generalizations about AICs have been taken for granted. The original AICs were rural, their members often uneducated, compromise with African religion was sometimes there, and cultural adaptation was often high; these new AICs seem to be the opposite in everything⁸² This brings up the issue of whether the term African Instituted Churches, covering such a large variety of churches, united only by a negative sociological feature (the absence of the *azungu* connection), can still be a useful tool for theological discussion.

Apolitical?

The typical Pentecostal theological attitude to politics seems to be to keep out of it, and often to be critical of "politics."⁸³ This was the position of the Apostolic Faith Mission, and Rijk van Dijk makes this to be a main point in his interpretation of the Young Puritan [Charismatic] Preachers, emphasizing that they did not just "keep out," but created for themselves, in a highly politicized society, a niche, relatively free from political pressure

⁸¹ *Mzungu* (plural *azungu*) is the term used in Chewa, Tumbuka and other Malawian languages for white people.

⁸² For a study of New African Independent Churches as different from [old] African Independent Churches see: Kibutu Ngimbi, *Les Nouvelles Églises Indépendantes Africaines (NAIC). Un phénomène ecclésial observé au Congo/Kinshasa et auprès de ses extensions en Europe occidentale*, PhD, ETF Leuven, 2000.

⁸³ This attitude is made easy by the very Chewa term for politics, *ndale*, which implies trickery.

and "with room for manoeuvre."⁸⁴ On the other hand, Charismatics have very much involved themselves in politics, at least after the decline of the Banda regime. Before the General Elections regular prayer meetings were held, so that the right President should be elected, with Kamlepo Kalua being seen widely as the Charismatic candidate. Some groups even bound Satan in prayer so that a Muslim could never become President of Malawi,⁸⁵ and visions were seen with the new President holding a bible, which was understood to mean that he would be a Christian. Kamlepo Kalua declared before the election that God had given him the victory.⁸⁶ I am not able to ascertain how far these spiritual exercises, widely out of touch with any reality, were shared within the Charismatic Movement as a whole, so they can be taken as only one, possibly minor aspect, but definitely representing clear political views.

The same seems to apply to a Charismatic organization in Blantyre, called the Pastors' Voice, whose speaker Pastor Tauro is regularly quoted with official statements assessing political events, statements which almost invariably support Malawi Congress Party (MCP) policies. He seems also to have acted on occasions as a court chaplain to Mudi House. Here again I am not able to assess how far these statements and activities represent the Charismatic Movement as a whole or major sections of it. Even if they do not represent the whole—which I think is true—they invalidate the assumption that Charismatics are invariably apolitical.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ This conflicts with the fact that Linley Mbeta, one of Rijk van Dijk's heroes, was a strong supporter of Life President Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda. She was one of the four speakers at parliamentary prayers in Zomba where she is reported as having said: "[She] wished the president long life. She urged the parliamentarians to operate within the will of God, noting that the Almighty had blessed Malawi by providing the country with a leader who sought God's guidance in every undertaking" (Matthew Schoffeleers, *In Search of Truth and Justice: Confrontations between Church and State in Malawi, 1960-1994*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1999, p. 228 [*Daily Times*, 10.8.1992]).

⁸⁵ The explanation given, after the election of a Muslim president, was that God's promises are sure, but sometimes take time to be fulfilled. So the prophecy was changed retrospectively from "A Muslim can never be President of Malawi" to "At one point in time a Christian will be President of Malawi." Since Muluzi left power, all his successors have been of Christian religion.

⁸⁶ When I asked him later about it, he said that God had indeed given him the victory, but that someone had taken it away from him.

⁸⁷ *Since this chapter was written, the Pastors' Voice has passed into obscurity.

By any description I am neither a Charismatic nor a Pentecostal, but I propose to take both movements seriously as genuine African contributions to Malawian Christianity, diversifying, troubling and enriching it, as it deserves.

18 Africa's Evangelical Turn¹

(2005)

A turn can mean different things. It may mean a turn around, or U turn, as we learned in driving school. It may mean "turning a bit," implying a slight (or not so slight) change of direction. It may also mean a turn, implying that we are taking turns, one after the other to manage driving a long distance in a single day.

When Africa is taking its Evangelical turn, it does not mean a U turn, but may include the other two descriptions. Christian Africa is indeed turning more to the Evangelical side, and it may be open to speculation if that is for just a turn (and if so, how long that turn will last).

Evangelical

As so many terms, Evangelical is defined differently by different (equally well intending) authors, and over the centuries the word has also changed its implications. While after the Reformation it meant what today is described as Protestant, during the 18th century it was more narrowly used to describe the Evangelical party of the Church of England. By extension Evangelical was also used to describe the type of piety that emanated from the Great Awakening, or, as others would call it, the First Evangelical Awakening.² After that the term was mainly applied to those who shared in the piety of the Holiness Revival (1858/9), or, as others would call it, the Second Evangelical Awakening.³ In the 20th century the term became, in America, somewhat equal to Fundamentalists, but in the 1940s the term

¹ First published as: "Afrikas evangelikale Wende" [Africa's Evangelical Turn] in *Evangelikale Missiologie*, 2005, pp. 83-99.

² It seems to me that this is the meaning implied in the name Evangelical Alliance, which is not fully covered by the German translation *Evangelische Allianz*, which sounds more like Protestant Alliance to the untrained German ear.

³ I have problems with counting, so I prefer to give the revivals distinctive, though maybe a bit idiosyncratic, names: I count these big Protestant revivals: (1) Reformation [1517] (2) Puritanism/Pietism [1572/1675] (3) Great Awakening [1734] (4) Restorationist Revival [1828] (5) Holiness Revival [1858/9] (6) Pentecostal Revival [1906] (7) Charismatic Revival [1960]. All revivals were highly innovative in their days, slightly chaotic and perceived as a threat to "proper" church life (including earlier revivals).

Evangelical came to the fore again.⁴ Around 1960 it spread to other countries, and in the German language the term "Evangelikal" was created.⁵

This term is, as almost everything in scholarship, defined with variations. I consider these as the necessary signs of Evangelical faith: (1) Emphasis on the bible (2) emphasis on personal conversion (3) emphasis on missions/evangelism (4) emphasis on the translation of faith into action. This definition has no clearly defined (organizational) borders, intentionally so.⁶

In this broad meaning of the word three groups can be distinguished: (1) Evangelical churches which go back to the four Evangelical revivals.⁷ (2) Evangelicals (individuals and groups) belonging to the classical (main-line) churches, but living an Evangelical piety.⁸ (3) Churches, that go back to the Great Awakening, but have kept Evangelical churchmanship and piety.⁹ In my paper I will pay special attention to the first group.

In addition to different historical interpretations there are also different perceptions of scope. Evangelical in the narrower sense would exclude the Pentecostals and the Charismatics, while Evangelical in the wider sense would count them in. I use the term in the wider sense.

⁴ Symbol of this is the founding of the National Association of Evangelicals in 1942.

⁵ This would be close to the then American meaning of the term, and be different from the term *evangelisch* [Protestant]. Still the *Evangelische Allianz* was not renamed *Evangelikale Allianz*, though that had been its meaning right from the beginning.

⁶ Evangelicals clearly have their own identity, but don't define it clearly. They cherish "*unabgegrenzte Eigenständigkeit*" [an undemarcated separate identity].

⁷ As such I count those that have a premillennial understanding of eschatology, starting with the Restorationist Revival.

⁸ Some of these are organized in fellowship movements, some are just individual church members, while sometimes whole congregations are defined as Evangelical. Most of the overseas main line churches (founded by Great Awakening missions) have a majority Evangelical character.

⁹ There are not many of these. A good example is the "Church of England in South Africa."

In the early centuries

Northern Africa

I am to write about the current turn of African church history, so I will keep my description of the early centuries to a few hints relevant to my topic.

The church in Northern Africa produced varied leaders, and some of them reflect in a way current divisions. I like Tertullian, the rigorist, whose concept was that Jerusalem had nothing to do either with Rome or Athens.¹⁰ And Cyprian liked Tertullian,¹¹ but I don't like Cyprian,¹² because he did so much to push the young church into a ritualistic ("mainline") direction.¹³ The North African church produced leaders that would today be called maybe Pentecostal or Charismatic, like Felicity and Perpetua, who were either Montanists or influenced by Montanist theology.¹⁴ And it produced the Donatists, who fought for the purity of the church, even where it might destroy it.¹⁵ And not to forget, it produced Augustine, whom Catholics, Protestants and Evangelicals claim as their very own saint.

But unfortunately the diversity of the church in North Africa was pushed away by the Arab conquest,¹⁶ and enriched the European Christian heritage,¹⁷ and Africa only indirectly through this.

¹⁰ As an Evangelical academic theologian I appreciate that he did not want to have anything to do with Caesar, but I can not do without the learning of Athens, Sevilla or Dar-es-Salaam. I think that Tertullian's writings show that he could not do without it either.

¹¹ He was aware that Tertullian had left the [only true Catholic] Church, still he claimed to read his theological writings every day.

¹² And I am still impressed by his integrity, wisdom and martyrdom.

¹³ "There is no salvation outside the [Catholic] Church," but sacraments administered by schismatics and heretics are still valid.

¹⁴ *Jonathan Nkhoma, *Significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls and other Essays. Biblical and Early Christianity Studies from Malawi*, Mzuzu: Mzuni Press, 2013.

¹⁵ *Steven Paas, *A Conflict on Authority in the Early African Church. Augustine of Hippo and the Donatists*, Zomba: Kachere, 2005.

¹⁶ The church continued in North Africa until the 14th century (Kenneth Scott Latourette, *The Thousand Years of Uncertainty*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, ⁵1976 [1938], p. 305), but much of it was flushed out through the Arabic conquest, as the church was much more at home in the Latin speaking (Roman/Phoenician) "immigrant" population segment than in the "native" Berber segment.

¹⁷ Tertullian is still the father of all Latin (Western) theology.

Egypt and Ethiopia

In Egypt the church survived the Arab conquest until today.¹⁸ It had its early share of diversity,¹⁹ but developed firmly into the Orthodox direction, this time in its Coptic form. From the 19th century onwards the Coptic Church also contributed to diversity, by providing the membership stock from which Classical and Evangelical missions could draw their converts to build up their Protestant forms of the Christian faith in Egypt.²⁰ But the post-Islamic Egyptian Churches did not influence Africa beyond the borders of Egypt.

Much the same may apply to the Ethiopian Church, much harassed by Islamic neighbours, but never conquered. It developed into the same Orthodox type of Christianity,²¹ and it also provided members for later Evangelical "mission" churches. Again the Ethiopian Church did not influence the rest of Africa much.²²

The next Christians to spread the Gospel in Africa were again Catholics, this time of the Roman Catholic type. Their expansion hit an all time low, when the Catholic clerical presence was reduced to 30 priests around 1800.²³

¹⁸ Statistics on this are disputed, but 10% of the population may be reasonable guess.

¹⁹ Some scholars believe that the earliest church history of Egypt has been suppressed because it had too many Gnostic tendencies.

²⁰ They also influenced the [mainline] Coptic Church to develop some more Evangelical aspects.

²¹ In spite of its name *Orthodox* Church of Ethiopia, it has always been in full communion with the *Coptic* Church of Egypt.

²² There was some influence, though indirect. In the late 19th century the very existence of the Ethiopian Church, never colonized by the West, and not originating from the West, was a powerful symbol for the African Independent Churches developing at that time, so that the whole movement was called "Ethiopianism." For Malawi, the accusation of Ethiopianism was leveled against Joseph Booth, who published in 1897 a book: *Africa for the African*. *Reprinted in a critical edition, based on the 2nd edition of 1897: Laura Perry (ed), *Joseph Booth, Africa for the African*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1998.

²³ Most of them mainly served European settler communities in places like Angola and Mozambique and on the islands off the west coast of Africa.

The Catholic decline was not much gain for the Protestants,²⁴ who in those years before William Carey (1792) had hardly any theology of missions.²⁵ In addition to some small colonial Protestant settlements there was the Dutch Reformed Church established in South Africa at the Cape. If anything that would be an early mainline church.

All these churches, Coptic, Catholic and Protestant, made little lasting impact on the overall evangelization of Africa, though in some cases they provided a foothold for further expansion.

The great missionary expansion

In the 19th century, Africa changed its religious affiliation, becoming Christian, at least south of the Sahara. This rapid expansion, besides meeting the religious needs of the African people, was the outcome of the work of the classical missions, the firstborn children of the Great Awakening. It is important to realize that it was not the Western *churches* that evangelized Africa, but the Western *missions*.²⁶ They imparted to the churches a mixed heritage, a (mainline) church structure borrowed from their home churches and a (revival) piety taken from the Great Awakening. I think that, by any description, these early churches could be called nothing

²⁴ I think that the transfer of Elmina in Ghana from Portuguese to Dutch ownership in 1637 was not a big gain for Protestantism. Yes, the old Catholic Portuguese Church in the center of the castle was transformed into an armory and a new Reformed church was established in one of the rooms on the second floor. The new church even produced a theologian, Jacobus Capitein, trained in the Netherlands, who wrote as his thesis a defence of slavery: *Dissertatio politico-theologica de Servitute, Libertati Christianae non contraria*, Leidse Hoogschool 1742, published as: *Staatkundig-Godgeleerd Onderzoeksschrift over de Slaverny, als niet strydig tegen de Christelijke Vrijheid*, Leiden: Philippus Bonk, 1742. Protestant influence outside the confines of Elmina was minimal.

²⁵ And if they had any, it was usually more anti-mission than mission, leaving space for missionary work only where a Christian prince had conquered or otherwise lawfully gained possession of territories with heathen inhabitants. *What positive mission theology there was, was found among the revivalists, at the fringe of or outside the mainline churches.

²⁶ The missions were mostly fully independent of the European churches (not so the two Presbyterian missions in Malawi), but they saw themselves as (of course unofficial) representatives of their churches.

but Evangelical. Still, through their structure they had an inbuilt possibility (almost necessity) of becoming folk churches like the churches in Europe.²⁷

Progress of the classical missions was slow in numbers, but the territory covered was large, and the few people who were converted in the first years or even decades were not the few brands plucked from the fire but the first fruits of a big harvest. So through their work African Christianity became mainly mainline and since the missions produced a good school system, the persons that led the African states to independence in the 1960s and after were virtually all mainline Protestant or [mainline] Catholic. So the public appearance of African Christianity was predominantly mainline. But different from the mainline churches in Europe church attendance remained high and the evangelical piety remained strong.²⁸ This meant worldwide a numerical shift to the South.²⁹

In Come the Evangelicals

New revivals produce new missions. Always. So did the Evangelical revivals. Though the first was the Restorationist Revival, it was somewhat delayed in its impact on Africa. The most immediate impact came from the Holiness Revival represented by the Faith Missions. Their aim was to reach the unreached, and since the coastal areas in Africa had mostly been reached, they concentrated, like the mother of all faith missions, the China Inland Mission, on the inland territories.³⁰ The first mission was organized by Fanny Guinness, the most prominent Evangelical mission publicist of her times.³¹ Though it started at one of the unreached spots on the western

²⁷ St Augustine had already clearly defined the church as a mixed bag of believers and others (*corpus permixtum*).

²⁸ In the Anglican Communion the numerically strongest Province is Nigeria, with 13 Million members, and growing.

²⁹ *The "centre of Christian gravity" was in 1800 in Northern Italy, in 2010 in Northern Mali (Todd M. Johnson, Kenneth R. Ross (eds), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910-2010*, Edinburgh University Press, 2009, p. 53).

³⁰ This brought names like Africa Inland Mission and Sudan Interior Mission. The same idea of reaching the unreached was also expressed in names like Heart of Africa Mission (later Worldwide Evangelization Crusade, now WEC [Worldwide Endeavour for Christ] International), Unevangelized Tribes Mission, or Regions Beyond Missionary Union.

³¹ In addition she was also (with her husband Grattan) the founder of the first Bible School (East London Training Institute, 1873) and its organizer.

coast, its name Livingstone Inland Mission³² indicates the goal: To reach the interior of the Congo Basin.³³ The faith missionaries were not interested in competing with the classical missions in their territories, because they considered them to be proper missions starting proper churches. But they saw that the classical advance—often due to their very success—had slowed down and in many cases ground to a halt. The concept of "reaching the unreached" led to a concentration of Evangelical faith mission churches in three main areas: The interior of Kenya, the Sudan Belt³⁴ and the Congo Basin.³⁵

The faith missions were keen to avoid competition with other missions over territory. They were happy to accept comity agreements and worked in the regions beyond, thus posing no threat to the classical missions and the churches established by them. Catholics never entered into comity agreements. The Faith Missions saw the Catholic Church not as a true Church,³⁶ and therefore Catholic countries were considered unreached.³⁷ In

³² Livingstone is here not the explorer, but the name of the Congo River proposed by Stanley, who wanted to name the Congo River after the great explorer.

³³ The LIM reached Kinshasa in 1883 and established, as its last mission, before the handover in 1884 to the American Baptist Mission, Equatoria, where the Congo ("Livingstone") River crosses the equator. The Congo cruelties were discovered and publicized by Swedish LIM missionaries from Equatoria (Klaus Fiedler, *The Story of Faith Missions*, Oxford: Regnum 1994, pp. 227-229).

³⁴ The Sudan Belt was the stretch of land between the Sahara and the rain forest areas in West Africa stretching to what is now the Sudan, and sometimes even including the parts of Ethiopia south of Addis Ababa. For a thorough study of the missionary approach to it see Christof Sauer, *Reaching the Unreached Sudan Belt: Guinness, Kumm and the Sudan-Pionier-Mission*, Nürnberg: VTR, 2005.

³⁵ Through the faith missions and other evangelical missions, the Congo Basin became predominantly evangelical on the Protestant side. For excellent detail see: Cecilia Irvine, *The Church of Christ in Zaire. A Handbook of Protestant Churches, Missions and Communities, 1878-1978*, Indianapolis, 1978.

³⁶ While the Roman Catholic Church was not considered a real church, the possibility was always accepted that individual Catholics could be true Christians. Madame Guyon and Fénelon were indeed Evangelical heroes. Though they got into trouble with their ecclesiastical authorities they remained Roman Catholics all their lives. An expression of such Evangelical interest is the fact that Moody Press reprinted her autobiography: *Autobiography of Madame Guyon in Two Parts*, Chicago: Moody Press, nd.

³⁷ In the 1930s, WEC established its missions in Senegal, Guinea Bissau (founder, Bessie Fricker), Ivory Coast, and Equatorial Guinea. The SMF (Svenska

spite of this, the faith missions worked foremost in territory unreached by both Catholics and Protestants.

In spite of accommodating nicely with the classical missions, the Evangelical faith missions brought a certain religious diversification to the missionary effort and to the nascent churches in Africa. In this process, also respecting comity agreements, the Brethren missions of the Restorationist Revival played a major role in some parts in Africa. They settled in the "Beloved Strip," a swath of territory stretching from Angola through Zambia and Katanga to North East Congo.³⁸

These Evangelical missions, if I simplify a bit, came 2-3 generations later than the classical missions. Their educational system was, usually, less comprehensive than that of the classical missions. These two factors combined led to the fact that when independence came, the Evangelicals had few people sufficiently well trained for national leadership positions. So Protestant Africa entered the age of independence showing a clear mainline face.

In Come the Pentecostals

The Pentecostal Revival started in 1906, its first missionaries left for China in 1907. Africa's turn came soon after. In many of the countries of Africa Pentecostals contributed their share to evangelization, and in a number of countries like Congo, they participated in comity agreements.

A big contribution was made by Pentecostalism in giving birth to major African Indigenous Church Movements,³⁹ the Zionist family of churches in South Africa⁴⁰ and the Aladura churches in Nigeria, both of which subsequently spread to other countries, mainly in the region. These days

Misjonsförbundet) worked in French Congo, to where they expanded from their base in Lower [Belgian] Congo, where their work had started as part of Livingstone Inland Mission in 1881, the first ever faith mission in Africa.

³⁸ F. Roy Coad, *A History of the Brethren Movement*, Exeter: Paternoster, 1968.

³⁹ I am not at ease with the common practice of taking "African Independent Churches" as a theological category on equal level with Orthodox, Catholic or Protestant. African Independent Churches can at best serve as a sociological category, but even that: is the absence of white people and/or of white mission connections really that important?

⁴⁰ *For the Malawian part of the South African Zionist family see: Ulf Strohhenn, *The Zionist Churches in Malawi: History – Theology – Anthropology*, PhD, University of Malawi, 2010; to be published soon with Mzuni Press (2015).

churches belonging to these movements may not be recognized by current Pentecostal churches as sisters,⁴¹ but the historical relationship is very clear.⁴²

In Africa the Pentecostal Movement is widespread, but has not reached the major proportions it has achieved in Latin America. There it is the most prominent group of Protestantism,⁴³ in Africa it is just one of the Protestant groups, though one increasing in strength.

And lately the Charismatics

Every major revival seems to spread around the world. For the earlier revivals that was achieved mostly through missionaries from Europe or America,⁴⁴ whereas the Charismatic Movement spread in Africa from the beginning under African leadership,⁴⁵ with major centres in Nigeria⁴⁶ and Congo.⁴⁷ Different from the earlier missions, the Charismatic Movement in Africa rarely started as a plant from an outside mission, but Charismatic churches came into existence very often after a period of germination in the form of interdenominational fellowships or within interdenominational para church movements.⁴⁸ Different from all the earlier denominational

⁴¹ Ulf Strohbehn, *The History of the Apostolic Faith Mission in Malawi*, Zomba: Kachere, 2004.

⁴² Anderson calls them "African Pentecostals" differentiating them from "Pentecostals" and Charismatics. With the Zionist churches in South Africa there is also a strong relationship to the Healing branch of the Holiness Revival through the Catholic Apostolic Church of Zion, Illinois.

⁴³ *For its tremendous growth in Brazil see: Andy Kennedy, *A Historical and Missiological Investigation of the Growth of the Assembléia de Deus in Pará, Brazil, from 1980 to 2010*, Evangelical Theological Faculty, Heverlee/Leuven, 2013.

⁴⁴ The major part in the evangelization of Africa was played by Africans, of course, but missionaries from the North were the initial transmitters.

⁴⁵ This does not exclude the role played by some missionaries as transmitters.

⁴⁶ *For Nigeria see Matthew Ojo, *The End Time Army*, Trenton/Asmara: Africa World Press, 2006.

⁴⁷ Kibutu Ngimbi, *Les Nouvelles Églises Indépendantes Africaines (NAIC). Un phénomène ecclésial observé au Congo/Kinshasa et auprès de ses extensions en Europe occidentale. Approche historico-missilogique*, PhD, Evangelical Theological Faculty Heverlee/Leuven, 2000.

⁴⁸ Kibutu Ngimbi describes this for Lower Congo (pp. 71ff). *For important insights from Malawi see: Bright Kawamba, *The Blantyre Spiritual Awakening 1969 to 1986: an Antecedent of the Charismatic Movement in Malawi*, University of Malawi 2013.

families which had, in Africa, a rural base,⁴⁹ the Charismatic Movement began its career in the cities and in the institutions of higher learning.

Since the Charismatic Movement remains often for many years in the fellowship stage, it is difficult to measure its strength in any exact way. But there is no doubt that its success has been high, especially among the urban population, and that most of those who join come from either mainline or from other evangelical denominations. Though a considerable number of people join from evangelical churches, the number of those who join from the mainline churches is sufficiently high to see here an Evangelical shift.

The Evangelical shift in Malawi

Malawi is one of the many countries of Black Africa, and though, of course, every country is different, it can be seen as somehow representative in terms of Christian development. It differs from some of the Black African countries in that it has a sizable Muslim minority.⁵⁰

Mainline territory

Malawi was reached earlier than other parts of Inland Africa, thus it has a clear main line beginning. The first Protestant missionary to reach Malawi was Dr David Livingstone,⁵¹ who, after his return to Europe, called for missionary work to be established in Central Africa in his famous speech in the University of Cambridge Senate House in 1857. As a reaction to this the Universities Mission to Central Africa directed its interest to Malawi. It started work at Magomero in 1861, but withdrew from there, due to many difficulties, to Zanzibar, but with a promise to return. Before they had found the way back to Lake Malawi (1882), two Presbyterian Missions from Scotland made Malawi their territory, the Free Church of Scotland taking the centre⁵² and the north (1875),⁵³ and the Church of Scotland taking the

⁴⁹ Their work in the cities developed as converts from the rural areas moved into the cities.

⁵⁰ Since 1931 the population census has not asked about religion, and figures given differ widely. Some Muslims give 33%, obviously a product of wishful thinking. About 17% may be a realistic estimate.

⁵¹ At that time he was no longer in mission employment, but he still considered himself a missionary blazing the trail for residential missionary efforts and fighting the slave trade.

⁵² Central Malawi was in 1889 transferred to the Dutch Reformed Church Mission of the Cape Province, which ultimately established its centre at Nkhoma, south east

south.⁵⁴ The Lake (at least its Eastern and Southern shores) was reserved for the Anglicans (UMCA).⁵⁵

In this comity of missions there was no place for the Catholics, and there were none, but when they finally came in 1901, they were seen by the Protestants as intruders into a country divided up already and sufficiently reached, though only a few thousand were Christians in the whole country. Competing as they were, the Catholics were mainline nevertheless, like the Protestants.

These three, until today, are the mainline churches in Malawi. Since the 1960s, a few churches have come into the country that elsewhere would be classified as mainline, like the Evangelical Lutheran Church,⁵⁶ but due to their smaller numbers, they have not been able to develop the mainline characteristics fully.⁵⁷

of Lilongwe. Now Nkhoma Synod of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP).

⁵³ The mission started at Cape Maclear in Central Malawi, moved upward the lake to Bandawe in the north (where the Tonga became the first Christian tribe in Malawi, not by being all converted, but by accepting the school system of the mission. Even today the Tonga are the most educated tribe in Malawi), then up the mountain to Kondowe, the place currently named Livingstonia. In 2003 the CCAP Livingstonia Synod has opened a University there, thus fulfilling the dream the founder of the mission, Dr Laws, had had in the 1920s.

⁵⁴ *For an informative and readable account of the Scottish – Malawian relationships see: Kenneth R. Ross, *Malawi and Scotland together in the Talking Place since 1859*, Mzuzu: Mzuni Press, 2013.

⁵⁵ But Livingstonia Mission did not like that the UMCA settled on the western shore of the Lake in Nkhotakota, and even less so that it climbed the mountain into the Ntcheu area (from where comes James Tengatenga, former Bishop of Southern Malawi, and my former PhD student).

⁵⁶ It was brought to Malawi by Malawian migrant workers who had become Lutherans in Tanzania, and missed their church when they returned to Malawi. They tried to join the [strictly Lutheran] Lutheran Church of Central Africa, which had been brought in from Zambia, but could not feel at home there either. So they started an Evangelical Lutheran Church, and received some support from Tanzania.

⁵⁷ Another candidate for this "late mainline" category might be the United Methodist Church.

Faith mission intruders

The faith missions in general went to the regions beyond. But Malawi was evangelized early, so not much of the regions beyond was left there, except a strip in the extreme south, which the South Africa General Mission entered in 1900.⁵⁸ Blantyre Mission may have considered the Lower Shire as its territory, but since they had not done anything there, they could not complain much.

But complain they did when Joseph Booth, a Baptist from Melbourne, though not a Baptist missionary, arrived in 1892,⁵⁹ and established an interdenominational faith mission (Zambezi Industrial Mission) at Mitsidi, only a few km west of Blantyre Mission, and another one (Nyasa Industrial Mission) in Likhubula, even closer by.⁶⁰ What he did was unusual for faith missions, and to some extent it was against his intentions. In his approach two concepts clashed, as he wanted to evangelize unreached Africa by means of self-supporting industrial missions.⁶¹ And to make ends meet in a self-supporting industrial (coffee planting) mission, the place must be in reach of a railway,⁶² and the railway passed much through territory reached (or at least claimed) by the classical missions.⁶³

The number of members remained small over the decades, the faith missions remained at the fringe of the overall mission enterprise in Malawi.

⁵⁸ SAGM was later renamed Africa Evangelical Fellowship which recently joined the SIM International. The missionary work resulted in the Evangelical Church of Malawi, Chididi Synod.

⁵⁹ *For his background see: Klaus Fiedler, *The Making of a Maverick Missionary. Joseph Booth in Australasia*, Zomba: Kachere, 2008.

⁶⁰ Likhubula these days is the home of Evangelical Bible College of Malawi, in which a number of Evangelical churches cooperate.

⁶¹ This was an innovative concept not uncommon at that time, and mostly with limited success. *He detailed his plans later in his *Africa for the African* (Laura Perry [ed], *Joseph Booth, Africa for the African*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1998, pp. 21ff.)

⁶² The third mission that Booth started, the [Scottish] Baptist Industrial Mission at Gowa (1896), almost 200 km north of Blantyre in quite unreached territory, even in the 1910s and 1920s found it impossible to make ends meet because of the distance to Blantyre to sell its products.

⁶³ Though the first two Booth related missions started close to (reached) Blantyre, they tried hard and with quite some success to evangelize less reached areas, NIM concentrating on the Ntambanyama area south east of Blantyre and the ZIM establishing work in the Angoni area north of Blantyre in the area of what is today Ntcheu.

Though few converts moved from the classical missions to the Evangelical faith missions, the faith missions produced an opportunity for spiritual development and ministry for a number of people who would not have developed so well in the mainline missions.⁶⁴

Missions of the Restorationist Revival

Though in Malawi today the Restorationist Revival⁶⁵ is strongly represented by most of its denominations,⁶⁶ the beginnings were small (and as varied as the revival was anyhow). Here again Joseph Booth was the leading figure, at least in the initial stages. In 1902 he opened at Malamulo the first Seventh-day Adventist Mission (which he had started in 1898 as a Seventh Day Baptist mission, again designed as an Industrial Mission).⁶⁷ The Seventh-day Adventist Church developed slowly,⁶⁸ only in 1907 was another mission started, Matandani not far from the Mozambique border in the west,⁶⁹ and then no other new mission until Thekerani (not far from Malamulo) in 1924.

The next Restorationist mission was that of the Churches of Christ. Booth, who had by then been forced to leave the country because of his

⁶⁴ A famous example is John Chilembwe, the first to be baptized in the Zambezi Industrial Mission. He had over years received some training and influence from Blantyre Mission (the John Chilembwe baptized there was a different person), but in ZIM and later PIM (Providence Industrial Mission) he became an influential leader.

⁶⁵ For the Restorationist Revival in its extreme diversity, from Churches of Christ and the Christian Brethren via the Seventh-day Adventists to the New Apostolic Church and the even more extreme Jehovah's Witnesses (and maybe even the UMCA). See Klaus Fiedler, "A Revival Disregarded and Disliked" in Klaus W. Müller (ed.), *Mission in fremden Kulturen*, Nürnberg: VTR, 2003.

⁶⁶ Today the Seventh-day Adventist Church with over 300,000 members is the third largest denomination in the country, having bypassed, at about 200,000, the Anglicans who held this position for long.

⁶⁷ In 1893 he had already welcomed George James, a British citizen but American trained, an unofficial Seventh-day Adventist missionary. But he died after a short time of malaria. At that time Joseph Booth, who later became a Seventh Day Baptist, was still a First Day Baptist, but had Sabbatist leanings.

⁶⁸ *Yonah Matemba, Aspects of the Centenary History of Malamulo Seventh-day Adventist Mission, Makwasa, Malawi, Zomba: Kachere Documents no. 53, 2008.

⁶⁹ For its history see Yonah Matemba, *Matandani. The Second Adventist Mission in Malawi*, Zomba: Kachere, 2003.

"Ethiopianism,"⁷⁰ encouraged the Churches of Christ in South Africa in 1906 to start missionary work in Southern Malawi. In addition in 1929 the Scottish Baptist Industrial Mission of Dowa was sold for a Dollar to the Churches of Christ.⁷¹

In 1908, again remote controlled from Cape Town, Booth introduced, through Elliot Kenan Kamwana, the Watchtower Society into Malawi. When Kamwana preached in the South (1908), he had very little success, but in the north, in his native Tongaland, he gathered and baptized about 10,000 converts in a few months in 1909.⁷² With strong support from Livingstonia Mission, the government curtailed the Watchtower activities,⁷³ but they still exist today.⁷⁴

Since the Jehovah's Witnesses do not accept other churches, they cannot be counted among the Evangelicals, but still, their Evangelical origin cannot be denied,⁷⁵ and so they are—maybe an unwelcome—part of the Evangelical turn of Africa.

⁷⁰ He may not have been the one who coined the slogan "Africa for the African," but he seems to have been a very early user and probably the first to introduce it into Malawi.

⁷¹ Both missions go back to the same background, but have developed differently. The Churches of Christ in the South are very strict on the independence of the local church (and have developed many sub groups), while the Churches of Christ in the Centre have developed a much more centralized structure.

⁷² J.C. Chakanza, *Voices of Preachers in Protest. The Ministry of Two Malawian Prophets: Elliot Kamwana and Wilfred Gudu*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1998, pp. 12-54.

⁷³ Since Kamwana, in line with Watchtower convictions, had predicted the end of the world for 1914, the government felt that he should wait for that event in Nsanje, where the resonance to his teaching was minimal. Later he was exiled to the Seychelles. In 1931 his churches were investigated by a Jehovah's Witnesses representative from America, who declared less than a hundred members as orthodox Jehovah's Witnesses. The others became an "African Independent Church" not recognized by the Jehovah's Witnesses. Today's Jehovah's Witnesses have rewritten the history. They say that Kamwana predicted the First World War, and indeed it came.

⁷⁴ After the end of the big persecution (1961-1992, peaking in 1972), the Jehovah's Witnesses have now about 60,000 members, about twice as many as at the end of the persecution. There are no reliable figures for the other groups that descended from Kamwana, a few thousand seem to me to be a good guess.

⁷⁵ It seems to me that Joseph Booth did see the Jehovah's Witnesses in his day as nothing but another Evangelical group with specific teachings. He did not stay long

A similar judgement may apply to the New Apostolic Church. Their teaching is less extreme, still they have no fellowship with other churches. I have no figures for them, but their congregations are quite visible, and about 20,000 members seem reasonable to me.

Of the remaining Restorationist churches, I have not found any Disciples and only very few that trace their roots from the Brethren.⁷⁶

As the other Evangelical churches, the Restorationist churches had a slow start, and the fact that they were accused by the colonial government of involvement in the 1915 Chilembwe Rising, did not help them to grow, either. But all the churches survived,⁷⁷ and later they began to grow faster.

Denominational Evangelical Missions

A rare Evangelical church in Malawi are the Seventh Day Baptists. It was again Joseph Booth who brought them into the country, this time from the United States of America. Their first mission was also an Industrial Mission, and when it ran into financial difficulties, Joseph Booth arranged for the sale of the mission to the Seventh-day Adventists. The few converts went with the sale, but 1908, again from Cape Town, Booth arranged for the Seventh Day Baptists to return, this time under the leadership of Charles Domingo. His attempts to win the Watchtower congregations over to Seventh Day Baptist met with limited success, but he established the Seventh Day Baptists on a permanent base in Malawi. Now there are about 20,000 of them, after India with 40,000 the largest national group worldwide.

with the Jehovah's Witnesses, but he left them, he claimed—credible to me—because they did not keep the Sabbath. It is also possible that he did not fully understand (or did not want to fully understand) the Watchtower teachings.

⁷⁶ This is a recent group that is not using any of the typical Brethren names, but the name of the Brethren Mission Society *Christian Mission in Many Lands* (which, of course, in the Brethren view is no such a thing, but just a board of editors of the mission journal "Echoes of Service") *Now there is also a small Brethren Congregation in Mzuzu.

⁷⁷ One small church did not survive, the Church of Christ (not related to the other Churches of Christ) of Phillip Chinyama, the leader of the Auxiliary Rising in Ntcheu to the Chilembwe Rising. It consisted of only one congregation. Chinyama's Rising was, in military terms, as ineffective as Chilembwe's. The dispersed troops fled into the direction of Matandani, the second SDA mission in Malawi, which brought the Seventh-day Adventists into repute to have supported the Rising (Yonah Matemba, *Matandani. The Second Adventist Mission in Malawi*, Zomba: Kachere, 2003).

The Seventh Day Baptists provide quite an extreme example of a smaller Evangelical church that has, through its missionary work, tilted the scales to make the worldwide church predominantly Southern,⁷⁸ in this case Malawian.⁷⁹

If one ignores the brief episode of the Seventh Day Baptist Plainfield Mission and the Scottish Baptist Industrial Mission at Dowa, which in 1929 became Churches of Christ, the oldest (remaining) denominational Evangelical mission is Providence Industrial Mission (PIM), whose official name is African Baptist Assembly.⁸⁰ The founder was John Chilembwe, who had been taken by Joseph Booth to America for theological training⁸¹ and returned as a missionary of the National Baptist Convention, Inc., and who organized and led in 1915 the only armed uprising against colonial rule in the British overseas empire in those years. The colonial government banned the church from 1915-1924, and in 1926 Providence Industrial Mission was reopened by Dr Sharpe and Flora Malekebu,⁸² and now has about 80,000 members.

⁷⁸ In the USA there are less than 5000 Seventh Day Baptists, in New Zealand (which provided a major missionary for Malawi), there are a few hundred.

⁷⁹ The Seventh-day Adventist Church also has a Southern majority, and here, too, Malawi plays a measurable role. Dr Maliya, former gynaecologist at Blantyre Adventist Hospital, is in America working for the General Conference, the central governing body of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. To the African majority is ascribed the fact that in the Seventh-day Adventist Church women can not be ordained (yet). *The issue will be reopened at the 2015 General Conference when a different outcome is expected

⁸⁰ For its history see: Patrick Makondesa, *The Church History of Providence Industrial Mission*, Zomba: Kachere, 2006.

⁸¹ Harry Langworthy, "Africa for the African." *The Life of Joseph Booth*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1996, pp. 77-92. While in America, he published in two editions: Joseph Booth, *Africa for the African*, Baltimore: Morgan College Print 1897 (Harry Langworthy, "Africa for the African." *The Life of Joseph Booth*, pp. 85-92). The book is again on the market with a critical apparatus: Joseph Booth (ed. Laura Perry), *Africa for the African*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1998.

⁸² Dr Malekebu was invited by Emma DeLaney, the second National Baptist, Inc missionary working at PIM, to study in America. When Emma DeLaney left in 1906, his family refused him to go, but not much later, he walked to the Coast, and worked his way on steamers first to England and then to the USA, where he was trained in theology at Moody Bible Institute and in medicine at Meharry College (incidentally the same medical school where Kamuzu Banda was trained later, a fact which Banda seems not to have appreciated). His wife Flora Ethelwyn G. Zeto

Over the decades many more denominational missions came to Malawi from abroad or were brought to Malawi by Malawians working abroad (*machona*).⁸³ Many of them were of the Pentecostal type, and they will be included under the next heading. Evangelical mission churches from the Holiness Revival came only later, the Salvation Army,⁸⁴ the Free Methodist Church,⁸⁵ the Church of the Nazarene and the Pillar of Fire Church.

Pentecostal churches and missions

The Pentecostal churches came to Malawi rather late, and when they started to come, they progressed slowly for at least two decades. The beginnings were all *machona*, for the Apostolic Faith Mission and the Assemblies of God in at least eight different places, from Tanzania, Zimbabwe and South Africa. Robert Chinguwo brought the Apostolic Faith Mission from Zimbabwe to Munyali near Jali in Zomba District⁸⁶ in 1933, and in 1934 Eliot Nkunika brought the Assemblies of God to Gilbert Village, Dedza.⁸⁷

was born in Congo, but brought up by missionaries in America. For Malekebu's writings see: Daniel Malekebu, *The History of my Life and my Work*, unpublished, 1940.

⁸³ These churches brought in by migrant labourers are called here *machona* churches. A very good study of a typical *machona* church is Ulf Strohheln, *The History of the Apostolic Faith Mission in Malawi*, Zomba: Kachere, 2005. *A more recent *machona* church is the Evangelical Lutheran Church with its roots in Tanzania through returnees from where they had joined the Evangelical Lutheran Church there.

⁸⁴ It started as a *machona* church: Godfrey John Kamwendo, *The Salvation Army in Malawi: Its Origins and Development*, BA (Theol), University of Malawi, 2003.

⁸⁵ The Free Methodist Church has, over its first 20 years, every year grown by at least 10%. A major role in this unusual growth rate for Malawi is their approach to theological education. See Henry Church, *Theological Education that Makes a Difference. Church Growth in the Free Methodist Church in Malawi and Zimbabwe*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2002. For the history of the FMC in Malawi see pp. 43-71. *This growth has not carried on into the 21st century. For a more recent study see: Bernard Kalukusha, *The History of the Free Methodist Church in Malawi from 1969 to 2011*, MA, Mzuzu University, 2013.

⁸⁶ Ulf Strohheln, *The History of the Apostolic Faith Mission in Malawi*, Zomba: Kachere, 2005.

⁸⁷ Klaus Fiedler, "The Charismatic and Pentecostal Movements in Malawi in Cultural Perspective," *Religion in Malawi* 9 (1999), pp. 28-38 [31].

After 1960 the Pentecostal section of Malawian Christianity experienced a major expansion: The "old" Pentecostal *machona* churches started to grow much faster⁸⁸ and new missions came in, like the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, the Four Square Gospel Church and the Apostolic Faith Church.⁸⁹ While the classical missions and the early Evangelical missions had all followed the typical "mission station" approach (church, school, dispensary), the *machona* missions and the later Holiness, Pentecostal and Baptist missions did not follow that any more.

New missions after the end of missions

In the 1960s most African states gained their independence. Around the same time (sometimes a bit earlier, sometimes a bit later, and mostly gradually) the churches in Africa went through a similar process, gaining their independence from the missions that had given birth to them.⁹⁰ Western missiology considered the time of missions as being over, it being replaced by a new era of reciprocal dependency.⁹¹

Neither the end of mission nor the moratorium⁹² were ideas that resonated well in the hearts and minds of many Malawians. Of course, the administrative church independence was accepted well, financial independence was more accepted as a remote challenge, and many Malawians showed by their choices that they were not in favour of closing the missionary age yet.

⁸⁸ That foreign missionaries began to reside in Malawi was a factor in that growth, but far from the only one.

⁸⁹ Ulf Strohbehn is currently working on his PhD with a study of all Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in Mission. In a preliminary survey he found that in the City of Blantyre there are at least 127 distinct Pentecostal and Charismatic denominations.

⁹⁰ Some insights into this process can be gained from the career of the first Malawian General Secretary of Blantyre Mission: Silas Ncozana, *Sangaya. A Leader of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, ²1999. Translated by Janet Kholowa into Nyanja as: Silas Ncozana, *Sangaya. Mtsogoleri wa Mpingo wa Church of Central Africa Presbyterian*, Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 2001.

⁹¹ In German that found its expression in the beautiful slogan: "*Mission ist keine Einbahnstraße*," maybe the English version "mission in six continents" is equally valid, but more prosaic.

⁹² The moratorium was indeed proposed by an African church leader, John Gathu, and in doing so, he represented very few people besides himself, though he had been duly appointed to his representative position.

Their attitude made new missions welcome, be it that they came on their own decision or as a response to their being invited by Malawians⁹³ or that their beginnings were a combination of both.⁹⁴

The new missions and the resultant churches did change the denominational landscape perceptibly. The Baptist Convention with its maybe 100,000 members⁹⁵ comprises about 1.3% of all Christians, but in many rural areas it has a strong presence, and the city churches produced some important figures even in the life of the nation.⁹⁶ The Pentecostal Church of Canada has a thriving city church in Lilongwe (Area 18) and maybe 300 (mostly rural) congregations.

The list could be extended, but even without doing so, it becomes clear through the new missions and the strong growth in that period of the old Evangelical churches, the Restorationist churches and the *machona* churches, that Christianity in Malawi could no longer be seen as mainline plus a sprinkling of "minor churches." It was clear that the Evangelical

⁹³ The Free Methodists were started by Amos Phiri, who was a migrant labourer in Zimbabwe and then attended their bible school in Lundi. The strict Lutheran Church of Central Africa was invited by Malawian relatives of Zambian members.

⁹⁴ This is the case of the Baptist Convention of Malawi. The Southern Baptist missionaries on their own decided to extend their work from Zimbabwe, but many *machona* played a major role, foremost Stephen and Mary Galatiya, who came from Summerset West Baptist Church near Cape Town.

⁹⁵ The Baptist Convention has no statistics, the annual growth rate of 16% (the highest in all the Southern Baptist related churches) which missionaries computed around 1991 is pure fiction (2-3% maybe close to the truth), but since there are more than 800 congregations, a total community of 100,000 seems possible.

⁹⁶ Emanuel Chinkwita Phiri, currently President of the Baptist Convention in Malawi, was as Vice Chair of the Public Affairs Committee the effective spokesman for the democratic opposition during much of the transition process from single-party dictatorship to multi-party democracy (and survived at least one [staged] accident). Judge Dunstain Mwaungulu has the honor of having been impeached by Parliament for professional incompetence, though after many months and strong international protests, the President did not sign the impeachment. Mwaungulu's crime was that on the internet he computed the differences between the Presidential and Parliamentary votes and found out that there were about 300000 votes difficult to explain, being equal to the margin the President won with. - For the role of the smaller churches in the transition process to democracy see: Klaus Fiedler, "The 'Smaller' Churches and Big Government" in Matembo S. Nzunda and Kenneth R. Ross (ed), *Church, Law and Political Transition in Malawi 1992-94*, Gweru: Mambo-Kachere, 1995, pp. 153-170.

churches had come to stay and acquired their own territory, in spiritual as well as in numerical terms.⁹⁷

The Charismatic Revival

In Malawi the 1960s saw some decline in Christian vitality. In the 1970s an Evangelical revival took place with its centers in the cities and the schools. As is usual with revivals, the beginnings are difficult to define with exactness, but it is clear that interdenominational para-church movements played a major role⁹⁸ and that uptake and leadership was intensely local.⁹⁹

The revival influenced different denominations differently, but virtually all were touched, even the Roman Catholic Church.

The revival of the 1970s found its extension in (or gave way to) the Charismatic Revival of the 1980s, in which Blantyre Christian Centre was the first and Living Waters is the biggest church.¹⁰⁰ Most of the Charismatic churches developed out of fellowships or ministries,¹⁰¹ and all have urban origins.

Charismatic piety is in high demand among the better off urban people, and it gives convincing answers to the African Traditional Religion's deep quests for power, wealth and health.¹⁰²

⁹⁷ Without Pentecostal and Charismatic churches, 5% of the Christian populations seems to me a reasonable estimate, maybe a bit on the lower side.

⁹⁸ New Life for All and Every Home Crusade were leading in this. See Jack Selfridge, *Jack of all Trades - Mastered by One*, Evanton, Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 1996.

⁹⁹ *Bright Kawamba, *The Blantyre Spiritual Awakening 1969 to 1986: an Antecedent of the Charismatic Movement in Malawi*, MA University of Malawi, 2013.

¹⁰⁰ *Two recent dissertations show some of this growth: Blessings Mtinti, *History of Kakule Living Waters Church*, Lilongwe, BA, Mzuzu University, 2011; and Lloyd Jalazi, *A History of Living Waters Church in Ntcheu District*, BA, Mzuzu University, 2013.

¹⁰¹ There was one split off from CCAP, the Presbyterian Church of Malawi, but it seems not to flourish.

¹⁰² Matthew Ojo in his studies of the Charismatic Movement in Nigeria emphasizes that their answers to the deepest quest of African Traditional Religion made the movement deeply African. For this concept being taken up in Malawi see Rhodian Munyenyebe, *Christianity and Socio-Cultural Issues. The Charismatic Movement and Contextualization in Malawi*, Mzuzu: Mzuni Press, 2011/Zomba: Kachere, 2011, p. 72ff.

Statistics are difficult to come by, even where they exist. Living Waters may have 50,000 members.¹⁰³ If ten of the older and larger Charismatic churches are calculated as having 15,000 members each, and the over 30 newer and smaller churches as having 3,300 members on average, over 300,000 may be a reasonable estimate for the whole Charismatic Movement in Malawi. The Charismatic churches are growing rapidly.¹⁰⁴ They are still predominantly urban and wealthy, but they make serious efforts to spread to the poor suburbs of the cities and to the rural areas.¹⁰⁵ How far they will be successful, is not yet clear to me.¹⁰⁶ However, what is clear is that this transfer of urban educated churches into poorer and less educated parts of society needs a full missionary approach, with all that inculturation implies.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ From a German Charismatic News Service I learnt that Living Waters had grown rapidly to 125000 members. When I happened to sit in the same Johannesburg-Blantyre plane besides Apostle Ndovi, the founder and leader of Living Waters, I asked him how many members Living Waters had, and he answered that he did not know. I asked him: "What about 125,000?" to which he replied "Not at all." He agreed that 50000 could be a reasonable estimate, including some churches in Mozambique across the borders.

¹⁰⁴ Here again there are no statistics available, but the number of new buildings and congregations is convincing evidence, there is also enough anecdotal evidence for that. In 2005 the first student from Living Waters has entered the MA programme in the University of Malawi. She was a lecturer of religious Studies at the Domasi College of Education. *The first MA thesis produced by a member of Living Waters at Mzuzu is: Khetwayo Banda, Word Alive Ministries International (WAMI) and its Wholistic Mission, MA, Mzuzu University, 2012.

¹⁰⁵ *For a study of the history of Living Waters in a largely rural area see: Lloyd Jalazi, A History of Living Waters Church in Ntcheu District, BA, Mzuzu University, 2013.

¹⁰⁶ One somewhat difficult issue in the transfer of Charismatic piety to the poorer strata of Malawian society is the "prosperity gospel" supported in several of the Charismatic Churches.

¹⁰⁷ In their style, the Charismatic churches are very well inculturated into modern urban culture, including a preference for the English language in worship. So it happens that Charismatic Nyanja speakers from Blantyre come to preach in Zomba, where everyone of their listeners understands Nyanja, and preach in English, with a Nyanja translator (and often not a good one). It seems that John Chilembwe and Dr Daniel Sharpe Malekebu used the same method (information from Hany Longwe and Patrick Makondesa, gathered in the process of their MA researches, but not fully confirmed).

The Evangelical factor

My student Ulf Strohhahn has calculated that about one million people in Malawi are either members of Pentecostal or Charismatic churches or are influenced by them.¹⁰⁸ If I guess that 200,000 are influenced without being members, that leaves 10% of Malawian Christians as Charismatic and Pentecostal. If the other Evangelicals are added, then about 15-20% of the Christian population are on the Evangelical side.

The growth of the Pentecostal churches is widespread in Malawi, though maybe a little less even. The biggest Pentecostal church is still the Assemblies of God. The Pentecostal churches are still strong in their rural base, but some have successfully followed their members into the cities, and more recent ones had their start right in the cities.¹⁰⁹

The older Evangelical churches are still showing a remarkable vitality. They lose members to the Charismatic side, but win more members than they lose. They clearly increase in numbers, but their danger is an increase in nominalism, people who count themselves as church members but do not participate much in the life of the church.¹¹⁰

Up to now, I have only spoken of Evangelical denominations. But evangelical is a term (and a reality) wider than the denominations that are classified as such. Here estimates are even more difficult, as interpretations vary so much. Two of the three Malawian CCAP Synods are members of the Evangelical Association of Malawi, and their combined numbers make them the majority among the Evangelicals. But since they are folk churches with a large number of members who know no personal faith, that would falsify

¹⁰⁸ That would be a composition of about 300,000 Charismatics and 500,000 Pentecostals, and 200,000 as being influenced. As almost all religious statistics, these are estimates, but since they are made by an insider who has good critical abilities, they carry some weight. His results fall within the range of what I have observed so far here.

¹⁰⁹ Like the Four Square Gospel Church in Blantyre or the Apostolic Church in Great Britain and Ireland, which has an impressive church in Mzuzu.

¹¹⁰ A common device in churches both Evangelical and not is to provide for such members only low key funerals, for example without singing. When my church was asked to bury a child of such a member from a neighbouring Baptist congregation, it was decided that neither the pastor nor his wife should participate. I am not sure if such low key funerals encourage members to increase their commitment or if they just serve as a punishment.

the picture. Still, mainline Protestant churches have more Evangelical characteristics than in Europe or America.¹¹¹

Evangelicalism is alive and kicking in Malawi. Its influence¹¹² is growing in numbers. While the average annual growth rate of the main line churches may be around 2%, that of the Evangelical churches in the broad sense of the term may be closer to 5%. Since the annual population growth rate is at about 3%, it means that the mainline churches are declining by about 1%, while the Evangelical churches are growing (in real terms) by about 2%. That is not so much in a year, but even if the difference is calculated only at 2%, the trend is clear and after 10 years will be quite visible and has already been visible since I came to Malawi 22 years ago.

It is often assumed that transfer growth into Evangelical churches comes mostly from mainline churches. But such a simplified concept is not sufficient to capture the vibrant religiosity in Malawi. Though there are many Christians who tenaciously claim their denominational allegiance in spite of odds, and many more for whom denominational change is never an issue, there is an ever increasing number who are willing to change denomination for a variety of reasons.

One group changes to evade demands, financial or in terms of discipline. Such change often goes to a small number of African Independent Churches which are more lenient in their demands, or to Evangelical churches in places where the CCAP is strict in enforcing church contributions.

Another group are those who change out of convenience. This may be marriage,¹¹³ proximity,¹¹⁴ or other reasons like relationships, worship style or language. For those denominational change is incidental and may easily be reversed.

¹¹¹ There are virtually no fundamentalists in Malawi. I have met two so far, but of course there are some more.

¹¹² Since Evangelical churches in Malawi have more folk church characteristics than in Europe, the number of members with no saving faith here is also higher than in Europe.

¹¹³ In a carefully sampled study (by Henry Church) of those who joined the Free Methodist Church, about 50% were found as having joined because of finding salvation, and of them only a limited number were coming from Islam or African Traditional Religion.

¹¹⁴ An Assemblies of God woman complained to her pastor that her legs were not longer good enough to walk to the church. The pastor advised her to join the Free Methodist Church near her home. This is what she did.

Then there is another group of people who join another church because of a new theological insight or experience. For those who join Pentecostal or Charismatic churches this may be experienced as receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit, for those who join a Baptist church it may be termed as a second conversion or an opportunity for ministry.

The fourth group are those who were nominal Christian and experienced a conversion which led them to join the church which helped them in this experience.¹¹⁵ Again few reliable data exist on how big this group is.¹¹⁶

In which ways is denominational change moving?

Studies of the Baptist Convention history in Southern Malawi have shown that a considerable number of the early converts joined from other Evangelical churches, and that the Churches of Christ with their low level denominational organization supplied a good part of them.¹¹⁷ Sometimes whole congregations change their allegiance within the Evangelical camp.¹¹⁸ Such inner-evangelical transfers may well account for one third of the

¹¹⁵ Cases like the Evangelical Lutheran Christians from Tanzania who would not feel at home in any other Lutheran church are not unique. Others would pass several churches to reach their own church. Malawian migrants were also keen to establish their own (Malawian Presbyterian) churches in Zimbabwe, even up to creating their own Synod.

¹¹⁶ International mission agencies like Jimmy Hogg's Ministry or Christ for All Nations regularly report high conversion rates between 10,000 and 20,000 (excluding rededications) at their regular crusades, but these big achievements can nowhere be seen in the Christian life on the ground. In 2002 a big team crusade by International Teams based on Zomba Baptist Church and reaching out to the town and the areas around, yielded more than 17000 names of people who had accepted Christ as their Saviour. Not a single convert joined Zomba Baptist Church, and otherwise I have not been informed of any lasting effect of that big undertaking. There is obviously something wrong with the system.

¹¹⁷ Rachel Banda, *Liberation through Baptist Polity and Doctrine: A Reflection on the Lives of Women in the History of Women in the Baptist Convention in Southern Malawi*, MA University of Malawi, 2001, pp. 49-53.

¹¹⁸ In 2002 Mulunguzi Fundamental Baptist Church became Mulunguzi [Convention] Baptist Church, and over 50 members were—contrary to traditional Baptist practice—re-baptized. Recently Likangala Pentecostal Church not far from Zomba also became [Convention] Baptist.

changes. In some cases such a change may be greatly increasing a Christian's efficiency.¹¹⁹

Another one third may comprise of those who come from mainline churches to join an Evangelical church. Here the two Protestant churches (CCAP and Anglican) seem to be contributing more than the Roman Catholic Church.

The last third may comprise of all the others. There are very few converts from ATR, since there are so few of them left,¹²⁰ and also few from Islam,¹²¹ because work among Muslims is difficult.¹²² The other component

¹¹⁹ Davison Lichapa was a Seventh Day Baptist, and a good member of his church. After joining the Baptist Convention, he became a most efficient evangelist and church planter, and many churches in the South East Region of the Baptist Convention in Malawi trace their roots to his work and dedication * (Hany Longwe, *Christians by Grace – Baptists by Choice. A History of the Baptist Convention of Malawi*, Mzuzu: Mzuni Press, 2011, pp. 158, 185f.

¹²⁰ ATR does not exist any more as an organized entity. In spite of that in Malawian textbooks of Religious Education, it is given equal weight with Christianity and Islam. Since ATR was difficult to find in Malawi, traditional customs and institutions were used to stand in for ATR, like the *chinkhoswe* marriage or the chieftainship. But almost all chiefs are either Muslims or Christians, and many Christians (including my son) married by way of *chinkhoswe*. At the – definitely traditional – rain shrines, almost all the officials are either Christian or Muslim, though the rituals are not. See for example Isabel Apawo Phiri, "African Traditional Women and Ecofeminism: The Role of Women at Chisumphi Cult in Preserving the Environment," *Religion in Malawi* 6 (1996), pp. 14-19.

¹²¹ There are many claims that Islam has been growing in Malawi. While a growth in self-confidence, mosques and Islamic institutions is evident, the rate of conversions seems to be very low. A student researcher found that in Phalombe, a predominantly Christian area, Islam had gained converts at a rate of 0,13% per year over the last 10 years, mostly due to marriage. This gain was set off by an about equal number of losses, here again marriages being an important factor. An earlier study of Mchinji mosque found four conversions in living memory, two in each direction, all related to marriage.

¹²² Though the numbers are rather small, there are conversions from an Islamic background. The Baptist Conventions has three Yao Muslim background congregations; the Assemblies of God experience Muslim conversion and so do Catholics. But most converts join Evangelical churches. There are also a number of widows who return from Islam to their original church (like CCAP) after the death of their Muslim husbands.

of this group are those who join from African Independent Churches,¹²³ where one sometimes gains the impression that people move 'upwards' to a more respectable (Evangelical) church.

All this shows that the current religious change going on in Malawi is part of a larger picture of religious virulence. This virulence flows into different directions, but seen overall, it has an Evangelical bias.

And in all of Africa?

I have painted the picture of Malawi.¹²⁴ How does it compare with the rest of Africa? From what I have learnt the picture has many similarities.

The growth of the Charismatic Movement

The most current and most striking similarity is the growth of the Charismatic Movement. Here Malawi is not in the lead, as it may be strongest in Nigeria, but Congo is not to be overlooked, and neither are South Africa and Kenya, and in all countries there is a Charismatic presence.

Through its presence the Charismatic Movement has changed much of the African religious landscape. It is an indigenous African religious movement¹²⁵ with a high level of inculturation,¹²⁶ not into the traditional rural culture as this may have been the case with the so-called African Independent Churches, but into the educated urban middle and upper class culture.¹²⁷ Connections of the Charismatic Movement to the West should

¹²³ I do not like the term African Independent Churches as a *theological* term, but here *sociology* is implied, and thus the term may be acceptable.

¹²⁴ Though all figures are severely rounded, I claim that the overall picture is true in general.

¹²⁵ This is said against attempts by Paul Gifford to interpret the Charismatic Movement as a fundamentalist export of right wing American Christianity (Paul Gifford, *The New Crusaders. Christianity and the New Right in Southern Africa*, 1991).

¹²⁶ Mathew Ojo, a Baptist from Nigeria, argues that the Charismatic Movement is deeply African since it answers in a Christian way the three basic quests of African Traditional Religion: the quest for health, wealth and power. *He is convinced that these concepts of "rural" Traditional Religion even form the base for urban populations.

¹²⁷ This allows for the understanding that certain practices (like the preference for English or French) that look so Western are indeed deeply (middle and upper class) African.

not be denied, but it is clear that the impetus and the leadership are very African indeed, and so is the money.¹²⁸

If the Charismatic Movement is seen as a revival movement, then it will, after some time, lose some of its enthusiasm, slow down its growth rates and become another denominational family. This development can be expected, but if this perception is correct, the peak has not been reached yet. It will be for many years an expanding (and somewhat disturbing) factor in African Christianity.

The African Independent Churches have not fulfilled the missiologists' expectations

After an initial uneasiness with the AICs in missiological literature, it was Bengt Sundkler who paved the way for their acceptance as genuine Christian churches,¹²⁹ and for some scholars even to see them as the most genuine form of African Christianity. They were in the vanguard of inculturation, and inculturated churches are more genuine and more successful, since they really meet the needs of the African people. The problem with this view was that so few Africans joined them.¹³⁰ If one does not confuse the two, it is clear these days that the AICs do not appeal that much to the African people any more, and that "indigenous" development has gone the Charismatic and not the "Independent" way.

Declining denominational allegiance

This phenomenon, observed almost everywhere in the world, is very strong in Africa. People define their membership in a denomination—more often than not—not by its doctrine ("my church has more truth than others") or by tradition ("my family has always been Presbyterian"), but by convenience ("this is the church I feel at home in"). This makes it easy to participate partially in the life and worship of a different denomination, and also makes it much easier to move from one to the other.

¹²⁸ This statement does not exclude some donations from overseas, but that is the case for almost all denominations. That the Charismatic churches appeal to the upper and middle classes brings a lot of money in.

¹²⁹ Bengt Sundkler, *Bantu Prophets in South Africa*, London: Oxford University Press, ²1961.

¹³⁰ I am aware that AIC prevalence differs from country to country, with South Africa and Tanzania being on extreme ends. It seems to me that in South Africa (with its special racial history) these churches are still growing.

Main line churches grow by population growth

While in the Global West most mainline denominations decline, the same denominations grow in Africa. This is frequently attributed to their more Evangelical character in Africa against their more liberal character in the North, and there seems to be some truth in that.¹³¹ But it must also be seen that in many African countries the mainline churches only grow at a lower rate than the population does. This is still enough to make them numerically more powerful than the (faster) declining mother churches in the North, but it is a growth that will turn into decline as soon as the rapid population growth in Africa slows down to more manageable levels, a state of affairs that may not be further away than a generation.¹³²

Since the mainline churches come from an older revival, it is not astonishing that their growth rates have declined, as there must be room for denominations that come from later revivals. The question is how far their theology and message will influence their *numerical* development. Observations seem to indicate that a more "evangelical" or "conservative" tendency will improve numerical developments as over against more "liberal" or "progressive" tendencies.¹³³

Evangelicals grow faster

This is not true for each and every Evangelical denomination, as too many individual and local factors are involved, but the overall impression cannot be avoided that this is now Africa's Evangelical turn. Evangelicalism has changed from a small minority position to that of a larger minority that makes itself increasingly heard. Evangelical visibility has grown, and so has Evangelical involvement in public affairs. Whereas at first the ecumenical representative groupings were the only ones, from 1966 the Evangelicals from the Holiness and Restorationist traditions began to organize

¹³¹ For the worldwide Anglican Communion, this was made very clear by the Virtuosity News Service run by David Virtue.

¹³² Africa is usually credited with a high fertility (about 6-7 children per woman) producing a population growth of 3% and more per year. Over the last two decades the fertility rate has been visibly declining, at different speeds, but in situations as disparate as Muslim Cairo, Christian Nairobi or rural Malawi. This decline in the fertility rate per woman was not caused by AIDS, but it will reduce it further.

¹³³ I am aware that such labels are difficult to use, and that is why I put them in quotation marks. As I use them they indicate *tendencies*.

themselves¹³⁴ and now Charismatic cooperation is becoming a reality as is Charismatic participation in public affairs.¹³⁵

Evangelicals are doing quite well in catching up on numbers and politics, but in theology the process is slower. When it all started, ecumenical African theology was seen as *the* African Theology,¹³⁶ now there are even published African Evangelical theologians.¹³⁷ They slowly make their voices heard, but still have a long way to go to make good of the claim that theirs is a better African theology. The same applies to theological institutions. They are growing,¹³⁸ but the area to be covered is still big, if equality with the "ecumenical" institutions is envisaged. Charismatic schools of theology are springing up in many places, of differing academic levels.¹³⁹ Most of them are still in the pre-consolidation phase, and it is difficult to assess their lasting contribution to Evangelical theology.

¹³⁴ Christina Maria Breman, *The Association of Evangelicals in Africa. Its History, Organization, Members, Projects, External Relations and Message*, Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, ²1996.

¹³⁵ The most dramatic case here may have been Zambia, where President Chiluba (Charismatic but technically member of the United Church of Zambia) had Zambia declared a Christian nation. This was put into the preamble of the constitution, not as something legally binding but as a kind of moral imperative (Austin Cheyeka, *Church, State and Political Ethics in a Post-Colonial State: The Case of Zambia*, PhD, University of Malawi 2002. *Published as Austin Cheyeka, *Church, State and Political Ethics in a Post-Colonial State. The Case of Zambia*, Zomba: Kachere, 2008. It is intriguing to the outside observer that he was accused of exactly those immoral deals, which the Declaration was directed against.

¹³⁶ A claim contested by Black Theology in South Africa.

¹³⁷ Detlef Kapteina, *Afrikanische Evangelikale Theologie. Plädoyer für das ganze Evangelium im Kontext Afrikas*, edition afem, mission academics 10, Nürnberg: VTR, 2001.

¹³⁸ Much careful work is done quietly by ACTEA, the Evangelical accreditation agency for Africa.

¹³⁹ *Such schools were usually very influential in the initial stages of Charismatic development and of low academic levels. For Malawi it was the City Bible School in Blantyre (Bright Kawamba, *The Blantyre Spiritual Awakening 1969 to 1986: an Antecedent of the Charismatic Movement in Malawi*, MA, University of Malawi, 2013). An example from Sierra Leone is Freetown Bible Training Centre (1990) (Bosco Bangura, *The Charismatic Movement in Sierra Leone (1980-2010): A Missio-historical Analysis in View of African Culture, Prosperity Gospel and Power Theology*, 2013.)

Africa's high level of religiosity

Africa has little understanding of and sympathy for Europe's secularism. To even the most casual and/or biased observer it is clear that the Evangelical churches in Africa profit from a high level of African religiosity. This is a general fact. They also profit from population growth which adds to their growth rates.

What is the value of Africa's religiosity? Is it a racial characteristic?¹⁴⁰ Or is it a transient cultural state? There is no need to assume that Africa will go the same way as Europe did through and after the Enlightenment.¹⁴¹ But it needs to be observed how the increasing academic and economic development in Africa will impact on its religiosity. There is some evidence that practical secularism is growing, and that those who follow it reduce their church attendance.¹⁴² If that is true, Evangelicalism has to prove that its revival heritage is better able to deal with such developments as the folk church heritage of the classical churches.

The Evangelical turn

Whatever the details and whatever the assessment, there is an Evangelical turn in Africa. If the Holy Spirit is indeed bringing revival to push church history forward, Evangelicals have nothing to be proud of. But they should play their part and use the opportunities faithfully.

¹⁴⁰ This may be implied in my teacher John Mbiti's dictum that the African is "notoriously religious."

¹⁴¹ This argument may be supported by the observation that neither America nor Japan are as irreligious as Europe.

¹⁴² Aylward Shorter and Edwin Onyancha, *Secularism in Africa. A Case Study: Nairobi City*, Nairobi: Paulines, 1992.

19 A Community of Teaching and Learning, Research and Publishing¹ (2007)

Community is a much loaded and abused term, especially in donor speak. I use it, though, in the innocent meaning of people who are related to each other by some reason or another. And this word fits Kachere and its context: the learning and teaching at Chancellor College of the University of Malawi, the MA and PhD programmes in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies (and beyond), and all the hustle and bustle in the Kachere house, where all the programmes meet (and of course it is not the programmes that form the community, but the people involved in them). That's where Kachere is, in the middle of it all, influencing all and being influenced in turn. It is the Kachere story I want to tell. And since Malawi is only one of the many (relatively unimportant) African countries, I want to relate this story to scholarly publishing in Africa. I am neither black nor born here,² but I like to be here, and to publish here.³

A triple handicap

African scholarly publishing suffers from a triple handicap: (1) The volume of research done is not big (2) Proper scholarly publishing is done at Oxford, Hamburg or New Haven, or anywhere else in the (Global) North. (3) The third (and most dangerous) handicap is that so many people—in Africa and elsewhere—believe that the first two points are true.

True, there is more research done in the North, but Africa has enough to present a serious challenge to publishing; and having read a good number of academic works (re-)produced in the North, I have learnt that geography is no guarantee for quality.

¹ First published as: Klaus Fiedler, "A Community of Teaching/Learning, Research and Publishing" in *African Scholarly Publishing*, ed. by Prof. Alois Mlambo, co-published by African Books Collective, Oxford, INASP and Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, 2007.

² I have to leave both these qualities to my wife Rachel NyaGondwe Fiedler.

³ I had that dream already during my years in Tanzania (1965-1971).

True, the academic environment is not as good as it should be for research, and support of all kinds is often lacking.⁴ True, governments must spend more on their Universities, and Universities must improve the research environment.

If the above is true for the South, we also must keep in mind a few truths about academic publishing in the North. That academic publishing is struggling there is no secret, and the subsidies required to get a monograph published are considerable. One of our Kachere books was published first in German in Germany, with a subsidy of about 5600 Euro, and the pictures at the end were hardly readable. Subsidies of a few thousand Euros are very often required, and even then the prices are very European, too, with 49.80 Euro not being something strange.⁵ And even as subsidies are paid, print runs are limited, it seems that the print runs usually range from 200 to 700. While that is not much for the whole world, the prices restrict the availability of the books for those in the South. If the books are on the North, that is their own problem, but if a good academic monograph on Malawi is published only in America, very few copies will ever reach the country the book was written about and the academic impact on research and academic work in the country is *designed to be minimal*.

Forget the handicaps and look at the opportunities

Africa has a lot to offer for academic publishing in Africa. Different from 50 years ago, there is now a considerable body of academic research being done in Africa, and since research is a contribution to knowledge, such knowledge must be made public in order to be available for further research to build on it. Every Doctor's thesis must be a contribution to knowledge, and many Master's theses are, too. To hide them in the reference section of a remote library⁶ for researchers to hunt for does not do justice to either the researcher or the research results.

⁴ We must have some sympathy for the situation, if the money has already been spent on presidential travels and international conferences, the same money can not be spent on supporting research which has few political benefits.

⁵ *See my review of a study of Lomwe culture at the end of this book, published by Mellen Press and selling at \$119.95/£74.95.

⁶ No offence is intended here against our local University libraries, but are not all libraries in Africa remote, and even in much of the rest of the world?

Besides a considerable amount of research, there is also a growing number of postgraduate programmes, and that promises more research and more demand for publishing, as these postgraduate students need books and as they produce materials for further books. Due to financial constraints, donor fatigue and other reasons, there is also an increasing awareness among University leaders that postgraduate programmes are preferably to be done in one's own country.⁷

In addition to local African researchers, there are many researchers from the North who are happy to do research in one African country or another. While in the past European research in Africa was a bit like pillaging a treasure trove, it has now been recognized as a moral and academic responsibility to give back the research results to the people who provided the information. This requirement is definitely not fulfilled when a dissertation is duly deposited in three, twelve or whatever number of copies required in an American University. Neither is it fulfilled if 200 copies are published in Erlangen for 24.80 Euro. But if such a research is published (or co-published) in the country where it was done, even with 300 copies, it will make an impact there.⁸

Maybe the biggest asset Africa offers to academic publishing is the market. I am tired of hearing "There is no reading culture in Malawi,"⁹ and the endless repetition of such a statement does not make it true, as you do not need a whole nation reading in order to sell 500 books, and for these there is indeed a market in many African countries, even for scholarly books. And since some of them can also be sold in the North, you do not even need to sell all the 500 copies in your own country. There is indeed a market for academic books in Africa,¹⁰ and it is a market at the right place, since books on Africa are needed first of all in Africa.

⁷ Of course, it is nice to have a degree from Edinburgh or Seoul (and besides much experience in life one may also gain a refrigerator and a good computer), but why should African countries export the research students, who thus contribute to the greatness of the University of Copenhagen instead of that of Abidjan?

⁸ There was a Scandinavian conference in Zomba, a book and a journal issue were produced from the results, *Democracy of Chameleons* (co-published here) is in high demand, while there is no demand for the journal, since very few know about it.

⁹ Or Botswana, Zimbabwe or Senegal or any other country you like to name.

¹⁰ Our first experience here was our first big monograph, Harry Langworthy, "Africa for the African." The Life of Joseph Booth, 1996, 420 pages. The author could not find a publisher in the USA, though one offered to publish the book after a reduction of its contents by over 50%. I asked Langworthy to return the two

So better do it

Complaining, though often highly satisfactory,¹¹ does not help and may not be an academic virtue either. It may be better to get things done, look at the conditions of African academic publishing and get started. That is what we did. We did not have a detailed publishing plan, but we were convinced that we could produce scholarly books and that we could sell them. So after a pregnancy of almost two years the Kachere Series was born in May 1995, owned by the Department of Theology and Religious Studies of the University of Malawi.

Valuable connections

A peculiarity of our Department was its strong postgraduate programme. We had produced so far 4 PhDs and 10 MAs,¹² and more than these were in the making, and we insisted that all MAs are fully research based and therefore many would be publishable.¹³ Another peculiarity is that our Department is connected through the Board for Theological Studies (BTS) to seven church based theological schools, whose diplomas and degrees are therefore awarded in conjunction with the University of Malawi. We were intent on making the most of both connections: postgraduate programme and BTS. They would both profit from the books and buy them, and we would find manuscripts in the postgraduate programmes.

chapters which he had cut before asking that publisher, and we sold 600 copies in 2 years, and the reprint of 300 is also gone, and we have prepared the book for POD at ABC to keep it available. It still sells.

¹¹ It gives much emotional relief and saves a lot of time as nothing further needs to be done.

¹² These figures may not look high, but the whole University had produced less than 20 PhDs by 2007, and had for many years concentrated on undergraduate studies.

¹³ There might be a difference here with Science subjects in readers' interest. An MA on the history of the Apostolic Faith Mission in Malawi is easier to sell to the general public than an MSc on the use of votiva grass in hillside gardens in the Central Region. So publishers should capitalize on the higher general interest for Humanities subjects, but still find an appropriate way to publish more specialized Science dissertations.

Financing the venture

We started with a grant for the printing costs of the first three books,¹⁴ but then we were on our own, required to make ends meet. We never received any blanket subsidy, but subsidized the enterprise by love and labour (and for some years by not paying for the secretaries). We did receive subsidies for individual books, but for the majority we were not that lucky. We did not intend to make any profits that could be taken out, and all income was again invested in more books.¹⁵ In this way Kachere expanded, from 3 books and 6 journal issues in 1995 to 70 books and 10 journals in 2004.¹⁶ The seven editors receive as their reward a free copy of each book, but no fees, sitting allowances etc. The editorial team of reviewers ensured that only book manuscripts judged to be of high academic quality were promoted for publication in the prestigious Kachere Monograph series as a means of quality control.

Sales are crucial

In 2003 we sold 7,586 books¹⁷ and received 2,731,681 Kwacha for them (26,016 \$).¹⁸ This figure looks small, but kept 67 books and 10 journal issues on the market and Kachere going. Of course, this was only possible by keeping the overhead costs low.¹⁹

When analyzing the 2006 sales, I was astonished that 35% were sold through the bookshops in Malawi,²⁰ with three of them taking almost two

¹⁴ Given by the German Association of Protestant Missions and Churches in Hamburg.

¹⁵ By 2007 our stocks were 15668 copies (including 896 copies from other publishers) with a stock value of 25,159 \$ and a retail value of 46,749\$. (These and any other financial figures may be distorted by inflation and devaluation of the Kwacha, 24.5% during 2003.)

¹⁶ *By the end of 2013 the numbers had passed 150 books and 17 journal issues.

¹⁷ This is the number we received payment for. Total number of books dispatched was 7687. Payment for invoices is often slow. All but one bookshop receive books on consignment.

¹⁸ This figure excludes any subsidies received.

¹⁹ In a two-bedroom house, free for Kachere, there was the office, the warehouse and the "bookshop." A company car was never even thought of.

²⁰ One major bookshop with 17 outlets stopped buying Kachere books due to financial difficulties, and another with over 10 outlets bought very few for the same reason.

thirds of this. Next in line of sales comes African Books Collective with 17%, and public libraries took 7%.²¹ Important is the market which Kachere, in a way, creates for itself. The Department (office, lecturers, undergraduate students) took 8%, the postgraduate students took 2% and the institutions in the Board for Theological Studies absorbed 5%. Of our own creation is also selling to our authors, 5%, and almost the same we sold through our two link relationships. It is not easy to sell books in African countries outside our own, so 5% can be considered an achievement. Individual customers in Malawi, visitors (mostly from abroad) and the church in general each account for about 2.5% of the sales. Sales of journals and a few non ABC books in Europe and USA yielded 0.4 %, more than what the NGOs in Malawi bought.

All this proves that the market exists: 17% of it in the North and 5% in Africa outside Malawi. Of all the books about 55% are sold through bookshops, less than 30% is our "own market," and 15% are sold in Malawi to libraries and individuals.²² We have not touched the school text book market, which is the economic base of most African publishers.

The subjects

The Kachere Series started with a remit to publish "books on theology and religion in Malawi." Very soon we included books with a more political content, and some years ago we changed the remit to publishing "books and journals on religion, culture and society from Malawi." Of our 70 books, 59 deal more or less with religion, 5 with culture, 5 with politics, and one is a dictionary.²³ Of the religious books, 2 deal with Islam, 5 with African Traditional Religion.

Our aim is to make all research results and other manuscripts available in appropriate form.²⁴ We are the main academic publisher on Malawi, but

²¹ A small decline against 2002 because we did not produce enough new books in English.

²² It is of concern that the six university libraries rarely buy a book. Our library at Chancellor College gets 2 copies each free.

²³ Within the next months the remit will broaden, we expect to publish a anthology of Malawian poetry, a book on medicine and politics and a monograph on black/white love in literature.

²⁴ We are happy if other publishers in Malawi publish books within the same remit, but competition on that level remains low. For books published outside of Malawi we were happy if we could be included as co publishers. Of "Democracy of Chameleons," produced in Sweden, we sold over 400 copies here.

much good material still remains unpublished. A new departure to cope with this is the sub-series Kachere Theses, which converts dissertations into books.²⁵ A provision has also been made to print in a simpler way those dissertations for which we cannot see a market of 300. Here print on demand opens up new possibilities to make specialized quality material available without burdening author, publisher or donors unduly.²⁶

Of the 70 books, about 55 could be called "academic," about 15 (like smaller biographies) were not unscholarly, but could not make such a claim. The books range from 28-607 pages, with an average of 207 per book.²⁷ This means that 14,574 pages in books and 384 in journals have been published within 9 years. For the first print run we normally chose 500-700 copies, and reprints are usually 300 or above.²⁸ These print runs total about 60,000 copies, 45,000 of them sold by 2004. And such 45,000 books did make a difference in academia: For the authors who got published, for the students to get material to learn from and to relate their research to, and for academic life to develop one of its important branches: publishing. Not only the academia but also the general public profited. If you want any book on Malawi currently available, Kachere is the most likely place to find it.

The authors

Kachere is in Africa, but puts no stress on Africanness. We just want to be local, relevant and thus make a contribution to scholarship here and elsewhere. We do not mind if the author is black or white, but she or he must have a relationship to Malawi, either in person or in subject.

Of all the authors with their 70 books,²⁹ 19.53 books belong to the Department, 10 to the colleges of the Board of Theological Studies, 19.53

²⁵ In order to establish this new series, the International Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge provided a grant of over 8000 £. The first two books are with the printer.

²⁶ For POD a sale of 10 in the first year and 3 in any consecutive year is sufficient to break even.

²⁷ This can put to rest the idea that in Africa books must be small and have bigger print.

²⁸ There have been 26 reprints so far, with 5459 pages, about a third of the total list.

²⁹ The count does not take any account of the length of a book. If a book has several authors, each is expressed in a rounded percentage. The end result therefore is 0.14 more than in reality.

belong to Malawi otherwise. The rest of Africa has 2.77, Europe and America have 18.31 books. Authors from the North were all formerly in Malawi. Only two books were written by our students, but in 2004 we expect that number to reach 10, so that postgraduate research will find a better expression in publishing.

Want to try?

I love books, and to make them is more fascinating than to read them. I have enjoyed the nine years so far, our Department has gained valuable material and much external recognition, and in all that Kachere has made a contribution to knowledge, and what has been possible here may well be possible elsewhere.

This article reflects the situation at Kachere ten years ago, and therefore it has not been updated. Kachere Series is still there, having produced over 150 titles so far. I left Chancellor College (and with it Kachere) for Mzuzu University in 2008. Here I am using a similar approach with Mzuni Press, which has produced its 17th book in September 2014,³⁰ and has eight books advanced in the publishing pipeline.

Klaus Fiedler

³⁰ Plus two journals, one issue each.

20 Selected Dictionary Entries and Book Reviews

1. Ernst Schrupp¹

(2000)

Born in 1915 into an Open Brethren family in Beyenburg close to Wuppertal (Rhineland), he became, after service in the Second World War ("the years the locusts have eaten" Joel 2,25) and an experience of spiritual renewal, one of Germany's most influential evangelical mission leaders.

After release from the war Schrupp was one of the founders of the German InterVarsity Fellowship (Deutsche Studentenmission). In his spirituality he combined the Brethren's strong emphasis on the local congregation with the evangelical para-church movements' emphasis on evangelism and missions.

In 1948 Erich Sauer called him to be a teacher at Wiedenest Bible School, an interdenominational Bible School based on the Brethren Movement in Germany, started in 1905 in Berlin as the Alliance Bible School by Ms Tony von Blücher, Fredrik William Baedeker and others to train Christian workers from and for Eastern Europe.

From 1952 onwards the bible school developed into a major mission sending agency. Schrupp developed his missiological concept of the "sending local church," combining insights from Brethren missiology (see A.N. Groves) with those from the interdenominational faith missions. In his concept, which was effectively applied in his Wiedenest Mission [*now Forum Wiedenest] and which influenced many other evangelical missions, the "sending congregation" was not only responsible for the "commissioning" of the missionary, but equally for her or his continued material and spiritual support.

Beyond his own mission he was instrumental in the founding of several evangelical cooperative institutions, notably the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Evangelikaler Missionen (Evangelical Missionary Fellowship) in 1969.

Lit.: Ernst Schrupp, *Gott macht Geschichte. Die Bibelschule und das Missionshaus Wiedenest*, Wuppertal/Zürich 1995. – Ernst Schrupp died in 2005. He influenced me much and attracted me to missionary work in South Tanzania after my initial hopes for Cameroon had not materialized.

¹ Entry in: *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, ed. by A. Scott Moreau. Grand Rapids: Baker Books; Exeter: Paternoster Press, 2000.

2 Bruno Gutmann¹

(2000)

Bruno Gutmann was born in 1876 in Dresden, Saxony into a family of humble circumstances. He entered the Leipzig Mission Seminary in 1895 and worked 1902 - 1938 as a missionary of the (Lutheran) Leipzig Mission on the slopes of Kilimanjaro in Northern Tanzania, mostly in Old Moshi (Kidia) congregation.

As a missionary, he showed deep interest in Chagga culture, which resulted among other publications in the collection and preservation of the Chagga "tribal teachings" connected to the various transition rites so relevant in Chagga society.

Because of his many writings reflecting the work of the church in Old Moshi and beyond, he became probably the best known German missiologist before the Second World War. Gutmann's aim was to root the church deeply in Chagga society, not by paying much attention to folklore, but by basing the church's work on the three primal ties of kinship, neighbourhood and age-group, which he considered to be part of the image of God and therefore valid not for the Chagga only but for all mankind.

Gutmann is sometimes seen as the arch conservative, which he was not, as his work in Old Moshi congregation and his support for the mission's progressive educational system, based on Marangu, shows. His missionary approach, based on Lutheran premises, was very effective in coping with the quickly rising number of Christians, but when he tried to solve moral problems by making use of traditional Chagga concepts, he was often not supported by the Chagga Christians themselves.

Lit:

Bruno Gutmann, *Die Stammeslehren der Dschagga*, 3 vls., München, 1932-38.

Bruno Gutmann, *Gemeindeaufbau aus dem Evangelium*, Leipzig, 1925.

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¹ Entry in: *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*. Ed. by A. Scott Moreau. Baker Books: Grand Rapids; Paternoster Press: Exeter 2000,

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Klaus Fiedler, *Christianity and African Culture: Conservative German Protestant Missionaries in Tanzania, 1900 - 1940*, Leiden: Brill, 1996. Also Blantyre: CLAIM-Kachere, 1999, ²2007.

*Klaus Fiedler, *The Gospel Takes Root on Kilimanjaro: a History of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Old Moshi-Mbokomu (1885-1940)*, Zomba: Kachere, 2006

*Ernst Jaeschke, "Bruno Gutmann's Legacy," *Occasional Bulletin of Missionary Research*, October 1980.

3 Warneck, Gustav (1834-1910)²

(2000)

Though he was not the first German missiologist, Warneck is called the "Father of German Missiology," because he held the first chair of missions at a German university (Halle 1896), wrote the first comprehensive German theology of missions (Gotha, 1892-1903), and even influenced strongly nascent German Catholic academic missiology (Joseph Schmidlin). Warneck (born 6.3.1834 in Naumburg, died 26.12.1910 in Halle) studied theology, but weak health prevented him from becoming a missionary. He became an inspector for the Rhenish Mission, then parish minister. Together with devoted colleagues like Grundemann, Christlieb and Zahn, he developed missiology by publishing the *Allgemeine Missionszeitschrift* (1874) and by starting "Missionskonferenzen" for the study of missions (1897). He furthered cooperation between missions through the Continental Mission Conferences (1866) and the German Missions-Ausschuss (1885). Warneck, much indebted to the Great Awakening and even to the Holiness Revival (Brighton, 1875), took the *Volkskirche* (folk-church, territorial church) as the goal of all missionary work (though it would start with individual conversions). Although Warneck actively opposed the early faith missions, not appreciating their ecclesiology and arguing that they would split an already fragmented German mission landscape even further, he is today venerated by many Evangelical missiologists.

² Entry in: *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, ed. by A. Scott Moreau. Baker Books: Grand Rapids; Paternoster Press: Exeter 2000.

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- Gustav Warneck, *Outline of the History of Protestant Missions*, 2nd English ed., Edinburgh: Oliphant, 1901.
- Gustav Warneck, *Modern Missions and Culture: Their Mutual Relations*, 2nd ed., Perth, Edinburgh, 1888.
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- *Hans Kasdorf, *Gustav Warneck's missiologisches Erbe. Eine biographisch-historische Untersuchung*, Giessen/Basel: Brunnen, 1990.

4 Karl Wilhelm Kumm and Lucy Kumm (Guinness)¹ (2000)

Karl Kumm was one of the great faith mission pioneers in the interior of Africa. His first wife Lucy (d. 1906), daughter of Fanny and Grattan Guinness, had followed her mother in using her literary talent to further the cause of the "regions beyond" (Congo, South America, India). Karl Kumm, born in 1874 in the (former English) German territory of Hannover, attended the East London Training Institute and joined the North Africa Mission in 1898 to work in Egypt, where he married Lucy in 1900. The Kumms took up Grattan Guinness' vision to reach the Sudan Belt stretching from Dakar to Khartoum, founding the Sudan Pioneer Mission, based on Eisenach/Germany. After disagreements they moved to Britain and started the Sudan United Mission in 1904 to reach the Sudan Belt from Nigeria. The SUM became one of the largest faith missions, with the unusual feature of combining interdenominational and denominational branches. 12 churches resulting from the SUM in Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Sudan count more than 3 million members. Kumm established home bases in Denmark, South Africa, New Zealand and Australia, where he married Gertrud Cato. Since 1910 a British citizen, Kumm nevertheless moved to the USA in 1914 to lead the SUM branch there. He died in 1930.

Lit.:

- Grattan Guinness, *Lucy Guinness Kumm. Her Life Story. With extracts from her Writings*, London 1907.
- Karl Kumm, *From Hausaland to Egypt through the Sudan*, London 1910.
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*An excellent dissertation is: Christof Sauer: Reaching the Unreached Sudan Belt. Guinness, Kumm, and the Sudan-Pionier-Mission, PhD: UNISA, 2001 published as: Christof Sauer, *Reaching the Unreached Sudan Belt: Guinness, Kumm and the Sudan-Pionier-Mission*, Nürnberg: VTR, 2005.

¹ Entry in: *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, ed. by A. Scott Moreau. Baker Books: Grand Rapids; Paternoster Press: Exeter 2000.

5 Apolo Kivebulaya, the Apostle to the Pygmies (c. 1864 – 1933)³ (2004)

Apolo Kivebulaya was a Ugandan missionary to Boga, a territory across the Ruwenzori Mountains that was first considered to be part of Uganda, but in 1915 was transferred to Belgian Congo. His dedication, holiness, suffering and poverty made him a saint. He started his life as a Muslim, was a soldier and a hemp addict, strongly opposed to Christianity. He was converted to the Christian faith in its Anglican form after reading the Gospel of Matthew. Like many of the early converts in Buganda, after his baptism he became a church teacher/evangelist.



In 1896 he started, alone, the missionary work in Boga, across the Ruwenzori ("Mountains of the Moon"), equipped with his bible and his hoe. His message was well received by some, but the king forbade his subjects to give him food. When he was

beaten and left for dead, a local woman found him and secretly nursed him back to life. Falsely accused of being involved in the accidental death of the king's sister in 1898, he was sent to Uganda to be tried. While in prison, he had a vision of Christ who encouraged him to continue his work. With much delay his innocence was proven, and King Tabaro welcomed him back, became a Christian and a close friend of Apolo Kivebulaya.

In 1903 he was ordained a priest, and after 1915 settled for good in Boga, to strengthen the church there and to reach out from there to the people of the forest. In 1932 the first Bambuti pygmies were baptized, and the title "Apostle to the Pygmies" shows the appreciation accorded to him.

³ Published in: Phyllis Jestice (ed), *Holy People of the World. A Cross-Cultural Encyclopedia*, Sta Barbara, Denver, Oxford: ABC-CLIO, 2004, pp. 481-482.

Apolo Kivebulaya died on January 30, 1933, revered by all. He had never married, and scandal had never even come close to him. His dying message was the commission to take the Gospel further to those forest people who had not yet been reached. Today Boga has its own Bishop and is one of the six dioceses of the Anglican Province of Congo. In 1977 the Postal Service of Uganda honoured him with a special stamp, and the worldwide Anglican Communion made him a saint. January 30 is his saint's day.

Further reading: A. Luck, *African Saint. The Story of Apolo Kivebulaya*. London, 1963. Louise Pirouet, *Black Evangelists*, London 1963.

6 The Encounter between Christian and Traditional African Spiritualities in Malawi: The Search for a Contextual Lomwe Christian Spirituality (2007)

By Francis G. Masuku. Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen Press, 2007. 396 pp., \$119.95/ £74.95.

In this book Francis Masuku, a Lomwe Roman Catholic priest from south-eastern Malawi and spiritual director and lecturer at Kachebere Major Seminary, explores the encounter of Christian and traditional African spiritualities among the Lomwe, who migrated in the twentieth century from Portuguese-ruled Mozambique to British-ruled Malawi, where 90 percent of them became Roman Catholics. Masuku first reviews the theological, historical-contextual, and anthropological concepts of spirituality. He then summarizes the coming of the Catholic missionaries, painting a bleak picture of their well-meaning efforts to plant the Gospel in Malawi. This section suffers from a lack of historical perspective. What follows is a discussion of missionaries after Vatican I (1870), who imposed their religion and Western culture on willing converts without knowing much about African Traditional Religion, which they dismissed simply as paganism, idolatry, or superstition. Any religious dialogue that took place happened privately in the lives of the Lomwe Christians, as the missionaries would have seen their views as syncretistic. In subsequent chapters Masuku deals with the contemporary relationship between Christianity and Lomwe Traditional Religion. The discussion, which is based on fifty in-depth interviews with priests, nuns, catechists, and lay Catholics, shows a good understanding of Lomwe culture and Traditional Religion. The interviews reveal that Catholic leadership, though now Lomwe, still strictly rejects

Traditional Religion. The priests show some good insights into the possibilities Vatican II (1962–65) offers for religious dialogue, but they do not communicate any of these points to the laity, who still believe that their ancestor veneration, spirit possession, and initiation rites (which, according to the church's teaching, are paganism or idolatry) involve serving multiple gods. Masuku's major theological contribution is to show that the Bible is open to people of other cultures, as revealed by God's covenant with all people, by the universal presence of God's wisdom, and by the existence even in Jesus' days of faith outside of Israel. Such theology, as represented by Karl Rahner, for example, is solidly based on Vatican II and related documents. Masuku maintains that this biblical basis and its official Roman Catholic interpretation allow Catholic theologians not only to promote inculturation but also to pursue a genuine encounter between Christian and traditional Lomwe spirituality. The author's arguments are impressive, but it is disappointing that he does not devote more space to telling us how such a genuine encounter of two spiritualities could take place. I can easily imagine how Lomwe ancestors could be venerated alongside Catholic saints, but I would be interested to read how divination, spirit possession, witchcraft, and sacrificial libations would fare in a dialogue between Christianity and Lomwe spirituality. This book is a serious and careful attempt to describe the current unofficial dialogue between Christianity and African Traditional Religion and to prepare for its transformation into a more official dialogue. It is a good tool for all who want to go beyond inculturation to a dialogue of spiritualities. A major drawback of this book is its price. It would have been desirable to produce a much less expensive Malawian edition. Since Malawians cannot afford it, I recommend it to those who can. My copy will be available in Mzuzu University Library.

Klaus Fiedler

7 T. Jack Thompson, *Christianity in Northern Malawi. Donald Fraser's Missionary Methods and Ngoni Culture*. Leiden/New York/Köln: Brill 1995, 292 pp.⁴ (1995)

Malawi has been (on the Protestant side) mainly an area of Presbyterian/Reformed missionary work, and therefore it may be of less interest to the German missiologists. But since the borders of Malawi (and maybe even the very existence of the state) go back to the (Presbyterian) Church of Scotland Mission, a study of Malawian Mission history has much to offer on missionary methods and on the relationship between church and state, and much research has been done on this, especially by British scholars.

Jack Thompson's book is the fruit of such research. It is a study of one of the most important missionaries of the Livingstonia Mission working in the North of Malawi. He was a pioneer among the warlike Ngoni, and under Fraser's leadership a major revival took place (1898-c1910) with meetings attended by up to several thousand people. One fruit of this revival was a major missionary work in Eastern Zambia. The revival used many Ngoni cultural forms, and the large "Conventions" (pp. 88ff) had some similarities with the traditional feast of the first fruits (*incwala*). For missiologists the fact that this awakening received its "fuel" from the Keswick Movement, which did not only influence the Faith Missions, but also many Classical Missions is worth noting.

For anyone studying the relationship between the Gospel and African culture this book offers much. Fraser appreciated much the Ngoni culture, and when he died in 1935, he was buried like a Ngoni chief in his cattle kraal. He combined this (somewhat unconventional) attitude with the (somewhat unconventional) theology of the Holiness Movement and still remained a true Presbyterian.

Thompson also makes a good contribution to the discussion of the relationship between colonialism and Christian missions. The Livingstonia Mission began its work in Malawi in 1875, more than a decade before colonial rule. Its work assisted the Ngoni of Mmbelwa in staying independent longer (till 1904) and it helped to make a peaceful transition to colonial rule.

The book is good to read, and it shows understanding, a careful analysis and a good presentation. The presentation is equal to the price of the book.

⁴ First published in: *Evangelikale Missiologie* vol. 12 (4/1996), pp. 122-123.

Thompson writes that little attention has been paid to Mrs Fraser, as was common with missionary wives. Thompson proves the point himself, in the whole book he mentions Dr Agnes Fraser, whom he calls "a very able and independent woman," only once in the text and three times in the footnotes as the keeper of her husband's archives.

Klaus Fiedler

This book was published with a highly regarded academic publisher in the Global North, and the "northern" price has made the book virtually unavailable in Malawi.

A dissertation that looks at Donald and Agnes Fraser from the local view point is: Cronon Mazunda, The Influence of Donald and Mrs. Agnes Fraser to Mzimba CCAP and the Community, BTh, University of Livingstonia, 2013 (available as a Mzuni Document).

8 Peter Haenger, Sklaverei und Sklavenemanzipation an der Goldküste. Ein Beitrag zum Verständnis von sozialen Abhängigkeitsbeziehungen in Westafrika (1997)

Basel/Frankfurt: Helbig & Lichtenhain, 1997, 306 pp.⁵

Missions in Africa were always involved in the making of social history, be it by intention or by default. Therefore Haenger's Basel dissertation is a contribution—and a welcome one for that—to both social history and church history of Ghana, where the Swiss/German Basel Mission started its work in 1828. While in the early years it accepted slavery as part of the existing social order just as Paul, the most famous early missionary, had done, the Basel Mission changed its policy to one of unilateral Christian abolition of slavery in 1862 on strict orders from Basel headquarters (Josenhans), thus moving ahead of the gradual development of the society and even of the British administration's slave policy by 13 years.

Haenger offers his microhistorical study of slavery as a challenge to the prevalent macrohistorical approach to the study of slavery. This is to me most welcome, since the macrohistorical approach is so often fraught with

⁵ This review was written for *African BookReports*.

generalizations, sometimes telling the reader more about the author than about the subject. Haenger successfully challenges some of the big assumptions and first presents a lively picture of slavery in coastal Ghana around 1860, which was but one form of social dependency and client relationships. Slavery could mean anything from being (illegally) killed as a sacrifice at a funeral via being sold abroad or being employed as a semi independent peasant to full integration into the family of the owner (marriage to its free members not excluded). "Pawning" was another frequent pattern of a client relationship, later outlawed with slavery, though never regarded as the same. Haenger carefully distinguishes between house-born and foreign slaves and shows that slavery and pawning were both social structures of mutual responsibility. The slaves developed no "class-consciousness" of being oppressed, but they were quite willing to use the new opportunities offered by missionary paternalism and (later) colonial liberalism to improve their individual lot.

When Basel Mission decided to abolish slavery within the church, not only were Christian slave owners perturbed, finding it difficult to extricate themselves from slavery, even if willing to do so (occasionally slaves were more an economic liability than an asset), but also many of the missionaries who would have preferred a more gentle and gradual approach to the (necessary) change in social structure. Since headquarters had decided, they carried out the decision faithfully, but were aware that being free did not mean, for almost all of them, a leap into freedom but a change in patterns of dependency and social security, this being sometimes an improvement, sometimes not.

In 1875 the colonial administration emancipated all slaves and pawns, a development the church had anticipated by half a generation. It had thus, though at some costs to personal well being and natural justice, pioneered new forms of economic investment (savings bank, land as capital investment, cash crop farming), that would soon become increasingly viable in the coastal society of Ghana.

It is a pity that the author wrote the book in German, though it is dealing with Ghana. It would also have deserved an index.

9 Todd M. Johnson and Kenneth R. Ross, *Atlas of Global Christianity*

Edinburgh University Press, 2009, ISBN 978-0-748632671, 361 pp. I have never seen such a book, and, while as a child I wanted to become a statistician and after that a geographer, I am intensely fascinated by the maps and the statistics. And as I ended up being a church historian, I am equally fascinated by the tremendous amount of historical information in this atlas. It is one of the products of the celebration of the hundredth anniversary of Edinburgh 1910, the famous world missionary conference. On 361 pages, crammed with information statistical and historical, it presents the status of World Christianity, and how it developed from 1910 to 2010 (pp. 47-321), and for good measure puts Christianity in the context of all the religions of the world (pp. 6-45).

This atlas has brought the science of International Religious Demography to new heights. It took its inspiration from the *Statistical Atlas of Christian Missions* published in 1910 for the World Missionary Conference as part of the work of its first Commission ("Carrying the Gospel to all the Non-Christian world"), and takes its strength from the tradition created by David Barrett, which first found its expression in the *World Christian Encyclopedia* of 1982 and 1995 and then in the *World Christian* (2001) and the *World Religion Databases* (2008).

The atlas presents the World Christian picture first by Christian Traditions (66-107), then by Continent and Region (110-207) and finally by Peoples, Languages and Cities. For every presentation there is a comparative analysis 1910/2010, and wherever feasible the appropriate Edinburgh 1910 map is shown as an insert. These comparisons show "how the vision glimpsed at Edinburgh 1910 became a reality in the course of the 100 years that followed" (Kenneth Ross, p. xvii). It shows that, though the percentage of Christians in the world has not grown since Edinburgh 1910, it has reached all the corners of the globe in the same hundred years, and that was indeed the wish, the prayer and the effort of the Conference.

A feature new to me is the presentation of information not by continents but by regions, like Eastern Africa from Eritrea to Mozambique, including Madagascar and the islands, and Western Asia, reaching from Georgia and Armenia to Yemen (pp. 152f). The maps and statistics of the atlas do not distinguish between the "native" population and temporary residents. While Edinburgh 1910 counted 50 Christians in Saudi Arabia, now there are 1,182,000, or 4.5% of the population. This must be related to p. 37, where Saudi Arabia tops the list of the countries with the least religious

freedom. In 1910 that doubtful honour was given to Afghanistan, which has now moved to eighth place, competing for that position with North Korea.

The atlas is fascinating in its comprehensiveness and detail. It accounts for 2.300.000.000 Christians in 4.850.000 congregations, 300 minor and 6 major traditions (p. 68). While many maps present the facts by country, a new feature are maps by provinces. The usefulness is best illustrated in Nigeria, where the South is mainly Christian, the North predominantly Muslim, and the Middle Belt (with Jos as its centre) mixed. Another new important feature is the presentation of religion in the cities, as these are becoming an ever more important feature of life (pp. 239-255). While Edinburgh counted London, New York, Paris and Berlin as the world's largest cities (with 19.2 million inhabitants), these are now Tokyo, Mexico City, Mumbai and New York/Newark (with 96.2 million).

A fascinating new concept is the "centre of gravity," where "an equal number of followers of the religion or tradition live to the north, south, east and west of this geographic point (p. xix 'How to use this Atlas'). The concept of the "centre of gravity" reveals much on religious change. For Hinduism and the Chinese Folk Religionists the points of gravity 100 years apart touch each other while the centre of Muslim gravity moved from South East Pakistan to Oman, as the Muslim percentage of the world's population increased from 12.6 to 22.4. For Christianity the centre of gravity is given since its beginnings. From its inception the centre moved North West, reaching Hungary in 1500, moving a little to northern Italy in 1800. The modern missionary movement in its first 100 years moved the centre to Western Spain in 1910. By 1950 it had moved south west to Madeira, since then it moves fast south east, reaching Tessalit in northern Mali in 2010 and is expected to reach Zinder in Niger in 2100 (p. 53).

An additional innovation is the Presentation Assistant on a CD at the end of the atlas, which contains all the maps (but not the articles) and offers enormous didactic opportunities.

If anyone wants to study World Christianity, this is a book to start from, full of information and resources. Special credit must be given to Sandra Lee of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization as the Managing Editor and to the organizations that financed the project.

Of special interest are pp. 98 and 99, which show a decline of Evangelicals from 4.6 to 3.8% of the world population. This depends on the narrow definition chosen, with other definitions yielding up to three times that number of Evangelicals. Africa has the highest number of Evangelicals, 104,475,000 (10.1%), while Melanesia has the highest percentage, 21.7%.

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Klaus Fiedler, born 1942 in Germany, is a missiologist and mission historian connecting the continents of Europe and Africa. He studied initially at the Baptist Seminary in Hamburg, but received his most formative education at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda, and he received Doctor's degrees from Dar-es-Salaam and Heidelberg Universities. He served for seven years as a missionary with the Kanisa la Biblia in South Tanzania, then 16 years in Germany as pastor, teacher and editor. In 1992 he started teaching at

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The volume constitutes Klaus Fiedler's crowning contribution to scholarship. Essays in the first half of the book focus on Malawian Christianity and how contrasting Powers, Gospel and Secular, engage each other, creating social, political and cultural conflict in the process. In the second half, Fiedler examines general missiological themes. These essays provide a broader missiological background, offering a theoretical framework necessary for appreciating the essays in the first half. He concludes with a chapter that reviews selected seminal books on themes under study. Fiedler, throughout the volume applies the "restorationist revival theory" he constructed in an earlier work (*The Story of Faith Missions*, Oxford et al... Regnum, 1994), putting emphasis on non classical missions and churches, not systematically covered in earlier scholarship. This volume, first of its kind on Malawian Christianity, will remain indispensable for a long time for those interested in Missiology and Malawian Christianity.

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